

Calvinist Contact

A Reformed Weekly

FEBRUARY 7, 1992/47th year of publication/No. 2293

'Teaching in China' programs challenge Canadians

Bill Fledderus

RICHMOND, B.C. — The number of agencies which co-ordinate year-long teaching stints in China has grown rapidly in the last 10 years: today there are at least 35, some of which are university exchange programs. Approximately nine of these hire Christian teachers (see 'China,' p. 2).

That growth is a testimony to the increasingly global vision of Canadians and to the growing accessibility of short-term foreign projects. Some agencies even accept people who cannot speak a word of Chinese and train them so that they are capable of teaching courses in "English as a second language."

Canadians who go to China to teach stand out like sore thumbs. The government watches them to be sure they do not corrupt Chinese students with Western ideas such as democracy and Christianity.

Chinese students are typically very inquisitive and they usually barrage foreign teachers with non-stop questions. Some of them ask about religious matters. Others are less brave.

Teachers who go to China go first of all to teach. But for many teachers this official reason is supplemented by a more personal one: a desire to befriend the Chinese and to show them that Westerners — and specifically Christians — do care for them.

"From what I've seen, Christians can make more of an impact than in American public school classrooms,"

says Ed Van Baak, the former director of a China outreach program from Grand Rapids, Mich.

"In both situations you're limited by what you are allowed to say in class, but if you're friendly, you can really make a difference," says Van Baak. "Chinese students are starving for friendship and Christian love."

The Chinese administration seems to prefer Christian teachers because they exhibit patience, an ability to sacrifice and do not complain as often. Many non-Christian Americans who have taught in China have reportedly been more likely to be troublesome or even "obnoxious," according to Van Baak.

Wybe and Jean Bylsma of Cobourg, Ont., are a middle-aged couple who intend to teach in China next year. Unlike some people who go for a single year of service, the Bylsma's have a more long-range goal.

"We want to go there to build bridges with leaders in various Chinese communities," says Mr. Bylsma. "We need to show love to them, to befriend them, to build cross-cultural relations with them. God has covenanted with us, and we should covenant with our neighbour."

Approximately 800 teachers now go to China each year, and at least 10 per cent of them are affiliated with the Christian Reformed denomination.

Choosing an agency

Almost all teaching-in-China agencies are based on the West coast of

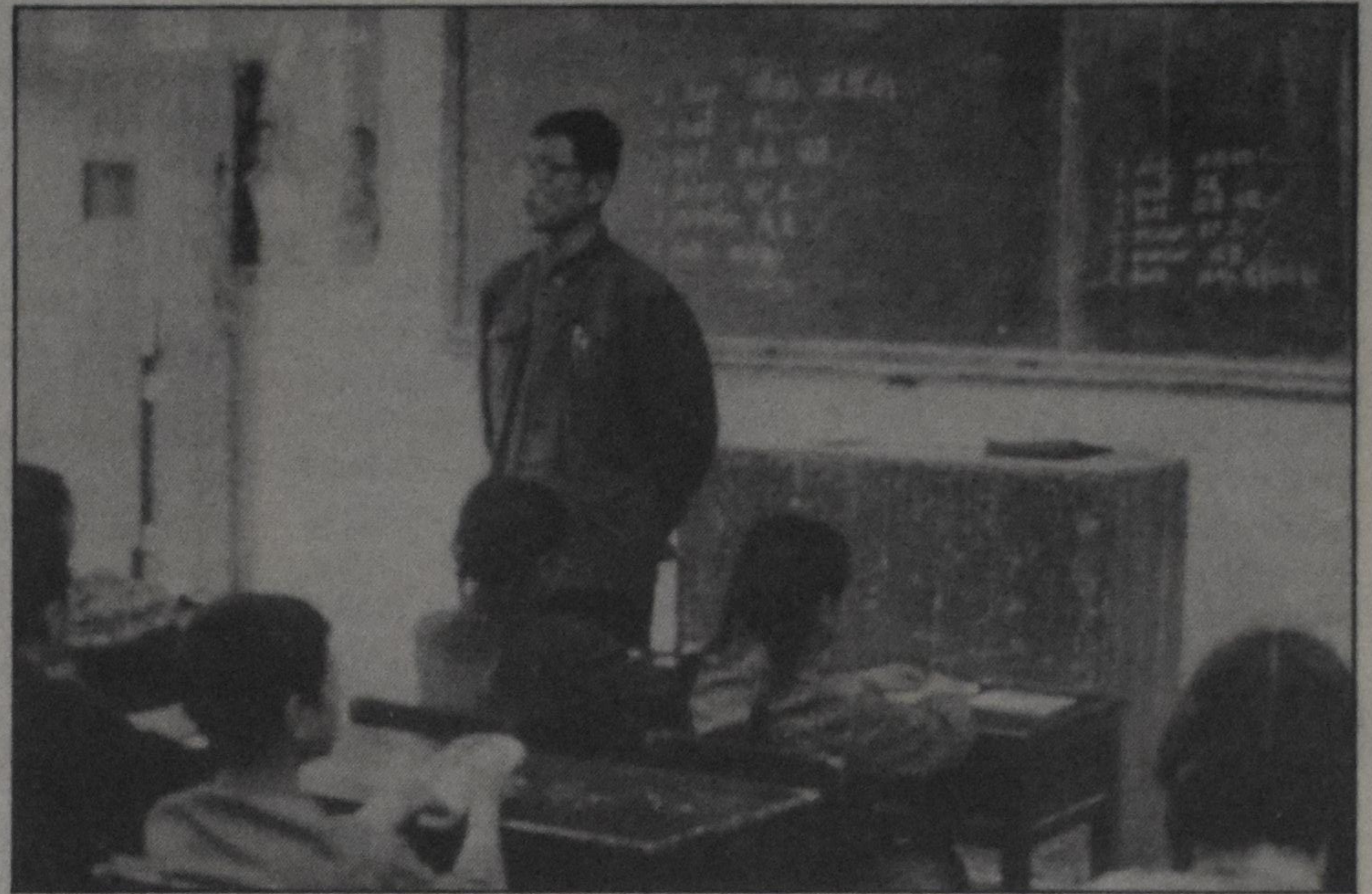


Photo: World Book Encyclopedia

Some Canadians who travel to China on summer programs help Chinese teachers like this one become better at teaching English.

North America. Choosing one agency from among them requires becoming well informed about one's own needs and about the different benefits available.

A good place to start is to examine the pre-departure training each agency offers. People who want to go to China but have little education and no foreign experience will probably have to restrict themselves to the largest agencies.

Generally, the larger an agency, the more training it can offer — and the more expensive that training becomes.

Smaller agencies may be more attractive for those with a greater amount of education or teaching experience. (Often, they do not operate expensive training programs). However, such agencies sometimes offer less overseas support (things like insurance coverage, orientation to things like banking, visits from agency co-ordinators, a trip to Hong Kong).

How much isolation and independence a teacher is willing to deal with is important. Something as elementary as finding out ahead of time the proximity of another English-speaking person should not be overlooked.

Programs in China also vary in length and time of year. In addition to year-

long programs, short summer programs also exist where Canadians prepare Chinese teachers to better instruct their fellow citizens in the English language.

A general introduction to agencies which hire Christian teachers may be found on the next page.

Thinkbit:

When one person calls you an ass, pay him no mind. When two people call you an ass, get a saddle.

Heard on "Insight for Living" by Chuck Swindall

In this issue:

Mins Reinsma reintroduces us to Greta, whom C.C. readers met a few years ago. She is a delightful young fictional character who insightfully comments on her world. p. 10

Lawyer Wietse Posthumus explains the issues to be considered in incorporating a church congregation. pp. 11-12

Bert Hielema analyzes Ontario Premier Bob Rae's methods and Angela Ferrante begs for moderation in approaching difficult issues. p. 14

Dordt professor works on lunar space station

Robert VanderVennen

SIOUX CENTER, Iowa — If a space colony is ever set up on the moon its

power distribution system may well have been designed by a Dordt College professor.

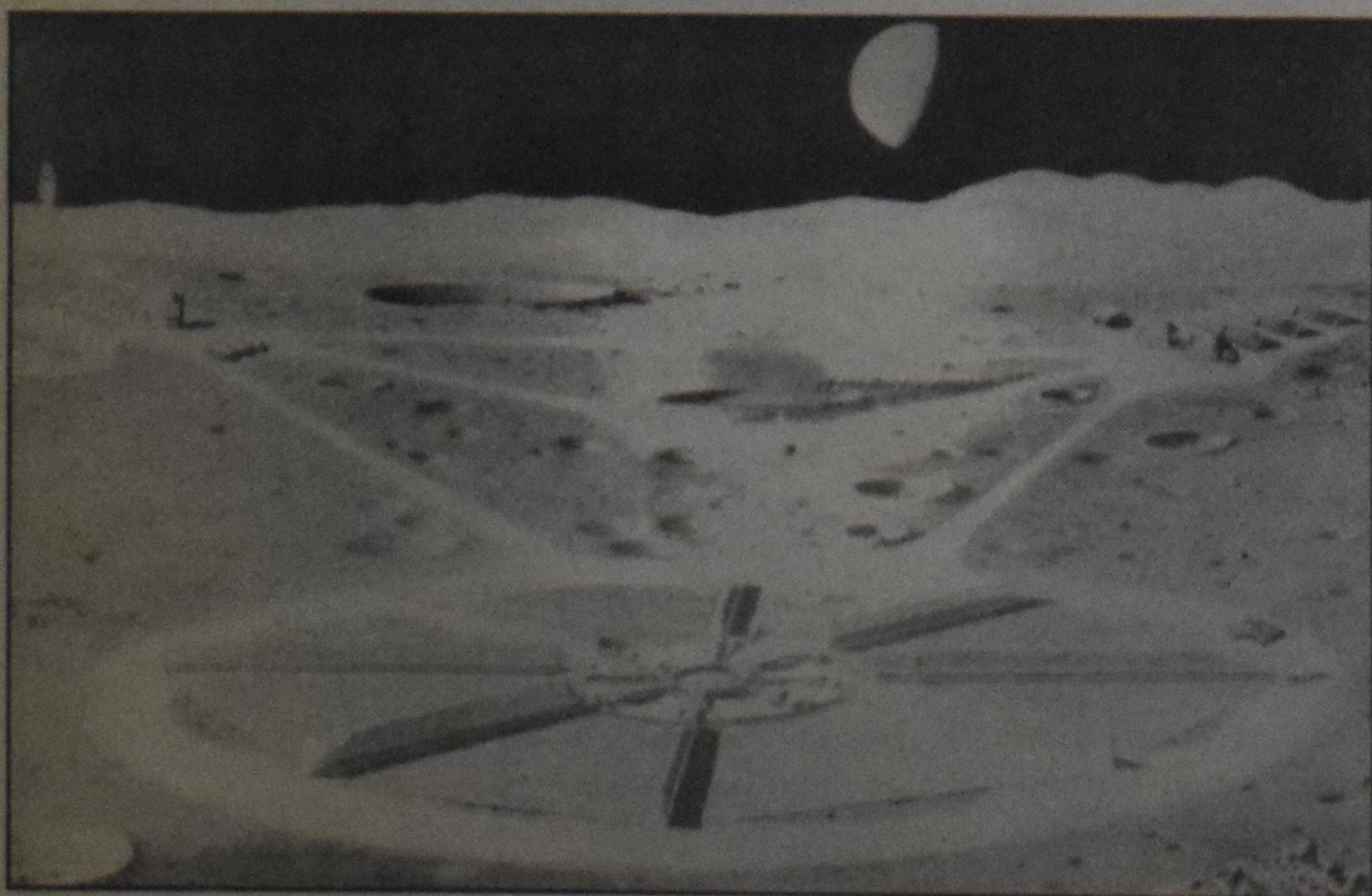


Photo: NASA

The proposed space station as conceived by NASA would include several distinct areas: a power supply, a launching pad, a living area and a mining area.

Dr. Paulo Ribeiro, professor of engineering at Dordt College, Sioux Center, Iowa, was invited to spend 12 weeks last summer at the Lewis Research Center in Ohio, an agency of the U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), reports the Dordt College *Voice*. Because of his expertise Ribeiro was asked to propose some basic topologies for a power distribution system that would link the different areas of the lunar base. Ribeiro has designed several power distribution systems for utility companies.

After drawing up various alternative plans, Ribeiro tested them through computer simulation programs. He used the same software that he uses in his teaching at Dordt.

A centralized integrated system appears to be more sturdily than individual units each having their own power supply, he says. Ribeiro notes that each pound of material that needs to be launched into space costs nearly

\$20,000.

Although the work was similar in some ways to work he has done earlier, Ribeiro did get into new territory that was interesting and challenging. "It opened my mind to the whole idea of cosmic stewardship, rather than just stewardship of this earth," he says.

The success of Ribeiro's summer work led NASA to encourage him to apply for a grant to continue some of that work at Dordt and to return again next summer. He says that his experience stimulates students and faculty colleagues to meet the ultimate challenge of their disciplines and not be satisfied with only comfortable tasks. "We should take very seriously the call to reform and lead in the area of technology," Ribeiro said in the *Voice*. "The technological world is crying for direction — specific direction — at this historical moment. Quantitatively speaking, we need more Christian scientists than we need elementary teachers."

China sending agencies

I. Established first-trip agencies with CRC connections

English Language Institute/China (ELIC)
P.O. Box 94397
Richmond, BC
V6Y 2A8
Ph: 1-800-663-0372 or 604-270-4924
(the largest agency; comprehensive training and excellent overseas support; team placements in smaller communities; about 170 year-long plus 180 summer placements; contact Fred De Vries)

Educational Services International (ESI)
1641 W. Main Street, Suite 401
Alhambra, CA 91801
Ph: 818-284-7955
(formerly Educational Services Exchange with China, or ESEC; sends about 70 English teachers yearly; the director is Danny Yu)

II. Other Christian-oriented agencies

China Educational Exchange (CEE)
Mennonite Central Committee
1251 Virginia Ave.
Harrisonburg, VA 22801
Ph: 703-434-6701
(sends 20-25 teachers for a two-year stay; Goshen College, a Mennonite institution in Indiana, paved the way for Christian teachers; director is Myrri Byler)

Canada China Program
Canada Council of Churches
40 St. Clair Ave. East
Suite 201
Toronto, ON
M4T 1M9
Ph: 416-921-4152
(sends one or two teachers per year, usually Anglican, United and Presbyterian; works with the Amity Foundation, a five-year-old Chinese humanitarian organization with connections to the official Chinese church;

director is Cynthia McLean)

Send International
312 Dolomite Dr., Suite 216
Downsview, ON
M3J 2N2
ph: 416-665-2047
(works with the New York-based Friends of China Foundation, FOC, which sends about 50 teachers per year; contact Eva Watt)

Jensco, Ltd.
Youth with a Mission (YWAM)
P.O. Box 1987
816 Beverly Commercial Centre
87-105 Chatham Road
TST, Kowloon, HONG KONG
Ph: 3-3113768
(contact Tom Jennings)

University Language Services (ULS)
P.O. Box 701984
Tulsa, OK 74170
Ph: 918-495-7045
(many retired Pentecostal couples; Dwyatt Gant is the director)

Mission to Unreached Peoples
P.O. Box 66400
Seattle, WA 98166
Ph: 206-824-7550
(the director is named Dan Martin)

Teachers for China
17855 Fitch Road
Irvine, CA 92714
Ph: unknown
(also has a Hong Kong office; contact Jon Dietz)

III. Agencies for experienced adults or

Correction:

In the front page story on seniors facilities (C.C. Jan. 24, 1992), Shalom Manor of Grimsby, Ont., is attributed a capacity accommodation of 102 seniors. In fact, when its addition is completed this fall, it can house 132 seniors.

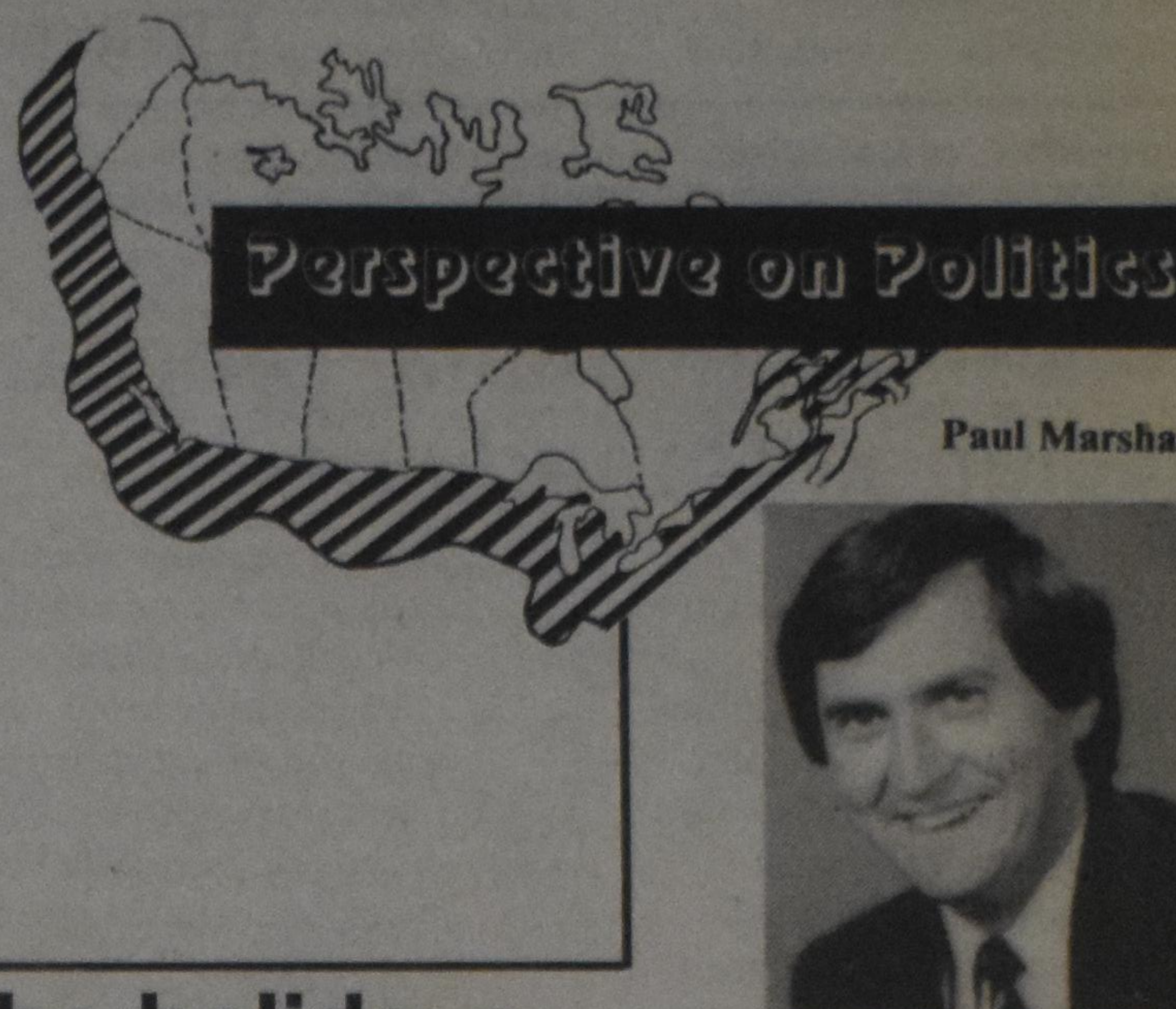
people with masters degrees

Educational Resources and Referrals — China (ERRC)
2606 Dwight Way
Berkeley, CA 94704
Ph: 415-548-7519
(about 30 masters graduates per year; contact Martha Chan)

Jian Hua Foundation
5 Broadleaf Dr.
Clifton, NY 12065
Ph: 518-371-2968
(about 30 people per year; run by former missionary Donald Dale; some long-term placements; based mainly in Hong Kong)

Foundation for East-West Trade Development (FTD)
48 East Main Street
Ramsey, NJ 07466

Ph: 212-870-2958
(former missionary Geraldine Poppen)



Paul Marshall

The end of the holidays

Christmas and New Year are behind us. We bustle along until "St. Valentine's Day" stands in our path. Another excuse, or threat, for frenzied card buying — or for apologies if we choose not to participate.

Admittedly anything that can enliven a Canadian February is not to be sniffed at. But most modern celebratory days, especially Valentine's Day, bring out all my native sympathy for Scrooge. "Bah, humbug," I say.

The most striking feature of modern holidays is their artificiality, their manufactured quality. They are dreamed up to commemorate things our politicians think we should commemorate: hence we get Victoria Day, Canada Day (remember Dominion Day?), even Labour Day. Or else they are designed to stimulate new bouts of consumerism: Valentine's Day, Father's Day, dare I add Mother's Day? The latest proposals seem designed to do nothing more than fill the spaces in the calendar which have no long weekends (Hallmark Day, anyone?).

The second most striking feature of these days is how boring they usually are. To be sure, we can have a great time getting together with family and friends, using an extra day to go fishing or hiking. But these activities have nothing at all to do with the supposed purpose of each of these "days"; they are simply time off. For the middle classes we would do better to have "cottage opening day" and "cottage closing day." The commemoration itself ignites little joy. Canada Day requires large infusions of money from various levels of government in order to convince people they are having a good time. How about making it "Speech Day" or "Fireworks Day"?

Of course, some days still call a little deeper to our hearts. Christmas does. New Year's does. In Quebec, St. Jean Baptiste Day does. Thanksgiving, Easter and even Halloween do, to a degree.

Religious roots

What is striking about these is that they all originated as religious holidays. With Christmas, Thanksgiving and Easter this is clear enough. But even New Year's Day did not originally merely celebrate something about the physical passage of time. (There's nothing astronomically significant about December 31st.) Rather, that holiday's roots lie in a recognition of new beginnings, in a new cycle in a world ordered under God's hand. St. Jean Baptiste Day has been reduced to little more

than nationalism, while Halloween is pushed to commercialism and even to something more seriously evil. But even in their names they retain something of the root from which they have sprung.

Why do "religious" and "quasi-religious" holidays retain some celebration while the newer ersatz creations do not? It lies in the nature of holidays — or "holy days" as they once were. Such days tied together worship and rest, and any attempt to separate these destroys both those elements.

In Ancient Israel a holy day involved rest — the Sabbath rest comes most readily to mind. This happened each seventh day, each seventh year, and in the 50th (7 x 7 + 1) year of Jubilee. The people, but the animals and the land too, were to rest. This rest was intimately tied to Israel's trust in God. If Israel rested in the seventh year, it needed to trust God's promise that the land would produce a surplus to see them through (Lev. 25: 18-24). In the year of Jubilee, Israel's faith was tested even more. As they celebrated the Day of Atonement they needed to put aside the work of their hands for two years: they would live by the gifts of God (Lev. 25: 8-12). In a similar vein the New Testament often pictures salvation as entering into rest (Heb. 3-4).

'Rest' is accepting God's grace

When we rest we acknowledge that all our striving will, of itself, do nothing. We let the world pass us by for a time. It involves a recognition of our own insufficiency and a handing over of responsibility. It is a moment of celebration when we acknowledge that blessing comes only from the hand of God. When we rest we accept God's grace: we do not seek to earn, we receive; we do not justify, we are justified.

Consequently a society without genuine faith cannot rest. So our "holy days" become ever more frenzied and joyless. As Christmas becomes even more secularized (prompted by the banalities of newspaper editors who pronounce *ex cathedra* that it is about "family" or "peace on earth") it is likely to lose whatever remembered joy it still has.

It was Jesus who said, "Come to me, all who labour, and I will give you rest." Only God can give us holidays.

Paul Marshall is senior member in political theory at the Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto.

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Just when the constitutional debate took a more amiable and generous tone the federal House leader, apparently afraid that the discussion would become totally civilized, re-injected the cantankerous temper that we had come to expect. The Honourable Harvie Andre found it necessary to deliver himself of the following outburst: "... Somebody should take Wells and Getty, and anybody else who's behaving that way, and find a deep lake and they can explore the bottom of it. These guys drive me crazy." Both Mr. Wells and Mr. Getty had had the evil courage to speak in favour of a triple E-Senate. What's this? A sort of Mafia threat?

Keith Spicer. Remember him? — Monsieur's constitutional \$23 million advance party — complained that Canada is being ruled and ruined by a media and political elite which "dines out on conflict and antagonism." Some people think that Mr. Spicer is a card-carrying member of that elite.

The Nova Scotia cabinet found a novel place to meet. The whole bunch boarded *HMS Halifax*, set out to sea and conducted its business aboard the frigate. Paid no rent, either, I bet.

Finance ministers from across this wide dominion met with their federal counterpart, minister of all trades Don Mazankowski, currently in charge of the empty nation's purse, who told them the bad news that he is not only scraping the bottom of the barrel but that he has scraped right through it to the tune of more than \$31 billion. That deficit is getting mighty scary, isn't it? Its size will set off all the smoke alarms in the country pretty soon. The provincial health ministers also pow-wow'd with each other and with federal minister Benoit Bouchard in Banff. They agreed that medical user-fees would not be initiated as a way to reduce the cash crunch in our health delivery system. Good for them!

I spent last week in St. John, New Brunswick, where a pianist played "Amazing Grace" in a shopping centre where they charge 11 per cent provincial sales tax. I was in the company of about 250 chaplains. Chaplains are ministers at the front line of the church's combat with evil. In the *Halifax Chronicle* I saw, side by side, these two ads in the classified section. The first one read: "Valentine Special, up to 50% off. Match-Mates 462-1321"; and right beside it: "Burdens are lifted at Calvary; phone 425-8787."

Monsieur is back in action firing away at the opposition. He took aim at the Reform Party's Presto for saying that a new Canada would not necessarily include Quebec. The second constitutional conference did not end as harmoniously as the first one did. The Halifax conference could agree on an asymmetrical division of powers, but that idea did not go over very well in Calgary. The discussions have shifted the focus to senate reform and away from the distinct society hang-up. At both conferences, though, there seemed to be some room for the power of positive thinking, which was refreshing.

Prince Edward Island Premier Joe Ghiz is paying the price of fame. On CBC's "Morningside" he did a radio version of this recipe for ceasar salad. His office now receives two or three calls a week from people who want that famous recipe.

It's tough all over: Petro Canada put on the brakes, the Quebec government plans to freeze public service hiring over the next five years, and retail chains are either on life support or they have folded. Is there any economic good news? Well yes, there is: low interest rates not only stimulate economic activity but also decrease the demand for Canadian dollars, bringing our currency to a level that would make Canadian products more competitive. The Bank of Canada did not interfere with the downward slide of the dollar, which might indicate that the government is

committed to a lower dollar value.


The power of money demonstrated itself once again this past week. The Macmillan Company was about to publish a book about the financial dealings of the Bronfman group. Following just one word of caution from the Bronfman office, the book was shelved like a forgotten and worthless heirloom.

The U.S. presidential campaigns had a sort of strange and weird flavour up till now. No sex scandal had slain any candidate yet, and the world watched in anticipation. Then sure enough, there appeared one Genifer Flowers to confess that she was the 12-year mistress of Bill Clinton, a Democrat hopeful. Back to normal folks.

And President Bush, eager to prop up the U.S. economy gave it the old college try with a whole lot of alley-oop shots: cuts in military spending, tax reductions (read his lips) and massive deregulation of business. Especially the latter sounds dangerous. It might initiate a new flood of acid air on the maple trees at my cottage. And it's bad news for whatever fish has survived the poison level in the Great Lakes. Ah well, it's campaign time. Now that the Russians are no longer an evil empire there is a considerable bit of Japan-bashing going on in the United States, which caused somebody to pose an interesting question: "Are we truly comfortable without enemies?"

Pressreview

Carl D. Tuyl



Somebody at Buckingham Palace does not think that the Princess of Wales should be called doctor. During her recent visit hereabouts, Queen's University was all set to elevate Her Highness to academic distinction with an honorary degree when word came from the palace: "Nothing doing." That's why she still is just plain Your Highness. Life is full of disappointments.

Boris Yeltsin is coming to dinner in Ottawa. It'll have to be Kentucky Fried, pizza or Big Mac. Yeltsin will be in a hurry; his plane will leave five hours after his arrival.

Iraq is really a family business. The Hussein family has monopolized the government. Sons, sons-in-law, nephews and cousins rule the roost. Now there are rumours that the family is suffering from some internal squabbles. That's not an entirely unknown phenomenon in the lives of families.

Thousands of anti-racist demonstrators marched through Paris denouncing both the extreme right National Front and the Socialist government for its tough stand on immigration.

How does your toast come out in the morning? I believe that that question

embodies one of the first uncertainties of the day, which is usually already filled with too many uncertainties. Well, gentle reader, take heart! Black and Decker is coming to the rescue with a see-through toaster. Just what you've been waiting for. Now at least one of life's mysteries will be solved.

A few "here and theres": In a Jakarta shopping mall a guy is locked in a glass cell for 30 days with 3,000 poisonous scorpions. He hopes to get into the *Guinness Book of Records*. A Japanese fellow reached the South Pole by motorcycle; and the Cheops pyramid, lone survivor of the seven wonders of the ancient world, is being polluted by tourists breathing on it and in it. Next time you're there, please hold your breath.

Valentine's Day is coming. I volunteer to be anyone's valentine, and I do like chocolate. Chocolate is, in my opinion, real soul food that quiets frayed nerves and soothes tattered egos. Peppermint, on the contrary, is a stimulating "upper" which people need to revive themselves. Just see if I'm right next Sunday in church.

Carl Tuyl is a member of the Ontario Provincial Interfaith Committee on Chaplaincy and chaplaincy co-ordinator in Canada for the Christian Reformed Churches.

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Editorial

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Did 'impersonal guilt' kill religion in the Netherlands?

Reformed people in Holland are reflecting on their past quite a bit of late. Maybe it's because the *Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland* (GKN) is celebrating its centennial this year. Maybe it's because the GKN is joining hands and hearts with the Reformed Church and the Lutheran Church of the Netherlands.

One front-page article in *Centraal Weekblad* analyses the religious scene in Holland in the form of a parable. The parable takes its story line from the book of Job. It paints a dreary picture of what went wrong in the Low Lands on the road to Jerusalem.

The Living One asks his opponent whether in his journeys throughout the world he has paid a visit to the Netherlands. "It's a cute country," says the Living One. "They have their faults. It's a land of merchants and ministers. But the neatest thing about the country is that they have two church services each Sunday in which the Story is being told. And they even try to pass on the Story to other lands."

The Opponent, also known as Satan, scoffs at the idea of the Living One being pleased with the Dutch, and he says, "Just let me have a go at these people and let's see what they're really like." The Living One agrees to a bit of a test, provided that the Opponent will go easy on the Dutch.

Smart weapons

That conversation took place many years ago, says the article. Today the Opponent appears before the Living One, who is quite sad about the fact that churches in the Netherlands are almost empty, that people have all kinds of problems and that young people take no interest in him. "You must have been very hard on them," says the Living One.

"Not so," says the Opponent. "I didn't have to use my big guns, such as plagues and sores. I used 'smart weapons.'" And he goes on to explain how his first weapon was an impersonal sense of guilt. The Opponent gave the impression to all Dutch people that they were to blame for all the problems in the world, also for those that took place a long time ago — exploitation through colonialism, the destruction of aboriginal peoples in far-away countries, the slave trade, poverty in the world, the polluted environment. Dutch people tend to be masochistic, he says, and they stepped into his trap.

And it was a trap, because the Living One had provided for alleviating personal guilt by offering forgiveness. But there is no forgiveness for impersonal guilt. So how could these Dutch people get rid of their burden?

Activism and cynicism

They resorted to activism, says the Opponent. The Dutch threw themselves into one action after another, one demonstration after another, just to make up for what they had done and to make the world a better place. They did not succeed in that because you need others to help you — the French with their chauvinism and the British with their isolationism.

After that burst of activity it was only a small trick to create a general sense of malaise in the Netherlands, the Opponent explains. People kept saying, "Whatever you do, it doesn't help

anyway." That's how the yuppies came about — people who don't care, except about themselves. A few groups remained faithful to the Living One, but they were dismissed as "evangelicals." So the majority of people got the feeling that the Living One had nothing to offer. They were guilty of everything, totally miserable, and not able to believe in the good.



Divine eclipse

But the Opponent played one final trump card. He invented the word *godsverduistering* (the eclipse of God) as a kind of natural phenomenon one cannot escape. People held conferences to discuss *godsverduistering*, but that did not solve anything. How can something that does not exist solve anything?

"You did a fine job," the Living One says to the Opponent. "You kept to the rules and yet half of Holland is stuck. How am I going to get them out of this pickle?"

"You can't," says the Opponent. "How can you help them when they don't believe in your help? After all, you have been 'eclipsed.'"

And that is where the parable ends. Since it is a parable, it's a story that did not really happen, says the author, E. Overeem. "Yet, a parable is true," he adds. "Right?"

Secular agenda

We thought we would give a digest of this story without commenting on it. With all kinds of speculations flying around in Reformed circles in Canada and the U.S. as to why Reformed churches in the Netherlands are declining — their view of Scripture, the decision to allow women to be ordained, the acceptance of homosexuals, etc. — it's worthwhile to listen to someone who is in touch with the religious scene there.

Whatever it is that led to a decline, it seems to have to do with an accommodation to a secular agenda.

The point of Dutch activism is nicely illustrated in a cartoon reproduced above. It appeared in a Dutch church paper some years ago. The impatience of a young guy holding up a sign "salvation now" stands in stark contrast to the prayerful attitude of the other worshipers, who realize that prayer (and life) is a waiting on and surrender to God, and that salvation is a gift that God bestows in divine sovereignty and mercy.

BW

Letters

The legacy of controversy can lead to unbelief

I am writing in response to a letter to the editor from Henk Lammers (C.C. Nov. 15, 1991). I read his wish to hear from younger people what they think of the present controversy in the Christian Reformed Church.

I was young once and am now 64 years old. I was involved in a similar controversy when young. My parents left the Dutch *Gereformeerde Kerk* for a few years to join pastor Geelkerken (the main dispute was about evolution). I have unhappy memories from this because my grandparents would not talk to my parents and me for a while because we went to a different denomination.

My wife and I have been away from the church for about 22 years. But thanks to the Lord's guidance and grace

we became members of the CRC again in February of 1991. That is my story. I am not proud of it and I don't want to justify myself by putting the blame on the church.

We are very glad that the Lord brought us back into the church, but our happiness is tempered by the fact that our five children, who are baptized, have no church affiliation. We pray every day that they may see the Light of the World, as we did.

May the Lord forgive us

Is the present controversy going to affect people the way it has affected our family in the past? May the Lord forgive us for what we are doing to one another.

The text for our wedding was Proverbs 3: 5: "Trust in the Lord with

all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding." The text was very apt for me. I was very long on leaning on my own understanding and very short on trusting in the Lord.

I am not an expert on the issues that are causing a lot of turmoil in the CRC, and they are probably important issues. But to me, very important are the words of the song "Amazing Grace" because I was lost and I can relate to being found again.

By writing this letter perhaps readers can see what happens when people get lost because of controversies. Some come back and some don't.

Norm Groot
Madoc, Ont.

Male headship applies to all Kingdom activity

Thank you for the free Christmas issue. As missionaries we would join the efforts of the retiring Canadian pastors to call for peace in the Christian Reformed Church. This call extends to the mission fields as well. We would like to continue to work with World Missions in the Dominican Republic, but not at the expense of disobeying the clear apostolic prohibition (1 Tim. 2: 12), which according to an integral Reformed world-and-life-view and hermeneutic, applies to the home, church and all areas of kingdom activity.

Even though a recent seminary study was willing to separate headship at home from headship in the church, such dualism and truncation of the Kingdom will make us broadly evangelical at best,

if not a distinctionless mainline Protestant church. What mission would we have left?

The World Council of Churches has defined the essentials as God the Trinity and Jesus Christ as Saviour. Is that all we want to unite us and define our mission in the world? Such reductionism on the side of the ecumenicals, on one hand, and the extreme fundamentalists and Pentecostals, on the other hand, should not be the parting words of the retired Canadian pastors.

If the Canadian pastors are really concerned about peace, let them visibly and publically stop supporting the ratification of the 1990 "women in office" decision. Perhaps those in favour of ordaining women would vote

against ordaining women, not because they are against it, but since "... not all things are helpful ... not all things build up" (1 Cor. 10: 23).

Neal Hegeman
Missionary with World Missions
Dominican Republic

Not yet time to ordain women

Although I am personally in favour of "women in office" in the Christian Reformed Church I nevertheless do not want to see Synod 1992 ratify such a decision for the following reasons:

- 1. Previous synods and study committees have not proven, without a shadow of doubt, that such a decision is the only true scriptural view or intent.
- 2. By accepting or introducing two different scriptural interpretations on this issue, the existing view or orders ought to have prevelance over the latter view.
- 3. John Calvin's warning should be taken seriously: "It was a father (St. Augustine) who affirmed its rashness when judging of some obscure matter, to take one side or another, without clear and evident witness of Scripture." (see *Institutes of the Christian religion*; prefacing address to the King Francis, point 4.
- 4. Ratifying the above-mentioned decision will cause great harm to the unity of the CRC.

J. Hultink
Renfrew, Ont.

More letters on page 6...

News digest

MVT Column editor

Computers need aboriginal languages

WINNIPEG — Computers can do a lot of things, but so far they can't type Inuktitut. And Dirk Vermeulen would like to see that change.

Vermeulen is an Inuit school board consultant and a member of the National Aboriginal Computer Users Committee; each of the 11 members represents a different aboriginal language.

The committee met in Winnipeg two weeks ago to plan a standardized set of computer characters drawn from those 11 languages. They want their symbols legitimized by computer manufacturers so that they — like Chinese, Japanese and Cyrillic characters, for example — can become one of the internationally recognized non-Roman alphabets on computer keyboards and templates around the world.

Each of the aboriginal languages uses a basic set of symbols representing phonetic syllables. The committee estimates that about 400 characters will be needed to encompass all 11 languages. The languages are: Inuktitut, Cree, Ojibwa, Oji-Cree, Nakapi, Gwich'in, Chippewyan, Dogrib, Carrier and Northern and Southern Slavey.

Nurture over nature re: alcoholism

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. — Despite recent studies which show that the tendency towards alcoholism is genetic, a new study using twins seems to indicate that environment is a bigger factor than heredity in those who become alcoholics as adults, University of Minnesota researchers reported in the most recent issue of *The Journal of Abnormal Psychology*.

Family environment plays a much greater role than family genes, the new study insists. "Our findings suggest ... researchers may be ignoring the significant influence that environment has in the origins of alcoholism," it says.

... It's Super-Bean!

GUELPH, Ont. (Canadian Scene) — University of Guelph scientists claim they've found a way to turn legume seeds into "super seeds" capable of producing at least 100 plants from a single seed.

The research has concentrated on seeds from legumes such as beans, peas, peanuts, chick peas and lentils. Consumers are interested in legumes — which are an important source of protein — and farmers are too, because legumes offer large financial returns. But because getting enough plants for commercial use has been a painstaking and expensive process, the new super seeds should be highly attractive to Canadian farmers, say the Guelph University researchers.

Serving Christ by mail

We have received a steady flow of letters in response to the appeal by 29 pastors, printed in the Dec. 6 issue of C.C., as well as to our editorial of Jan. 10, which told of how Truus Heemskerk experienced something that changed her mind on the ordination of women question. We did not print all these letters.

Our reasons for that, apart from the sheer volume of letters, are various. Some letters simply repeated arguments made by previous writers. Some were too lengthy and would require drastic cutting. But some letters were not printed because of the hostile or negative tone which the writer adopted.

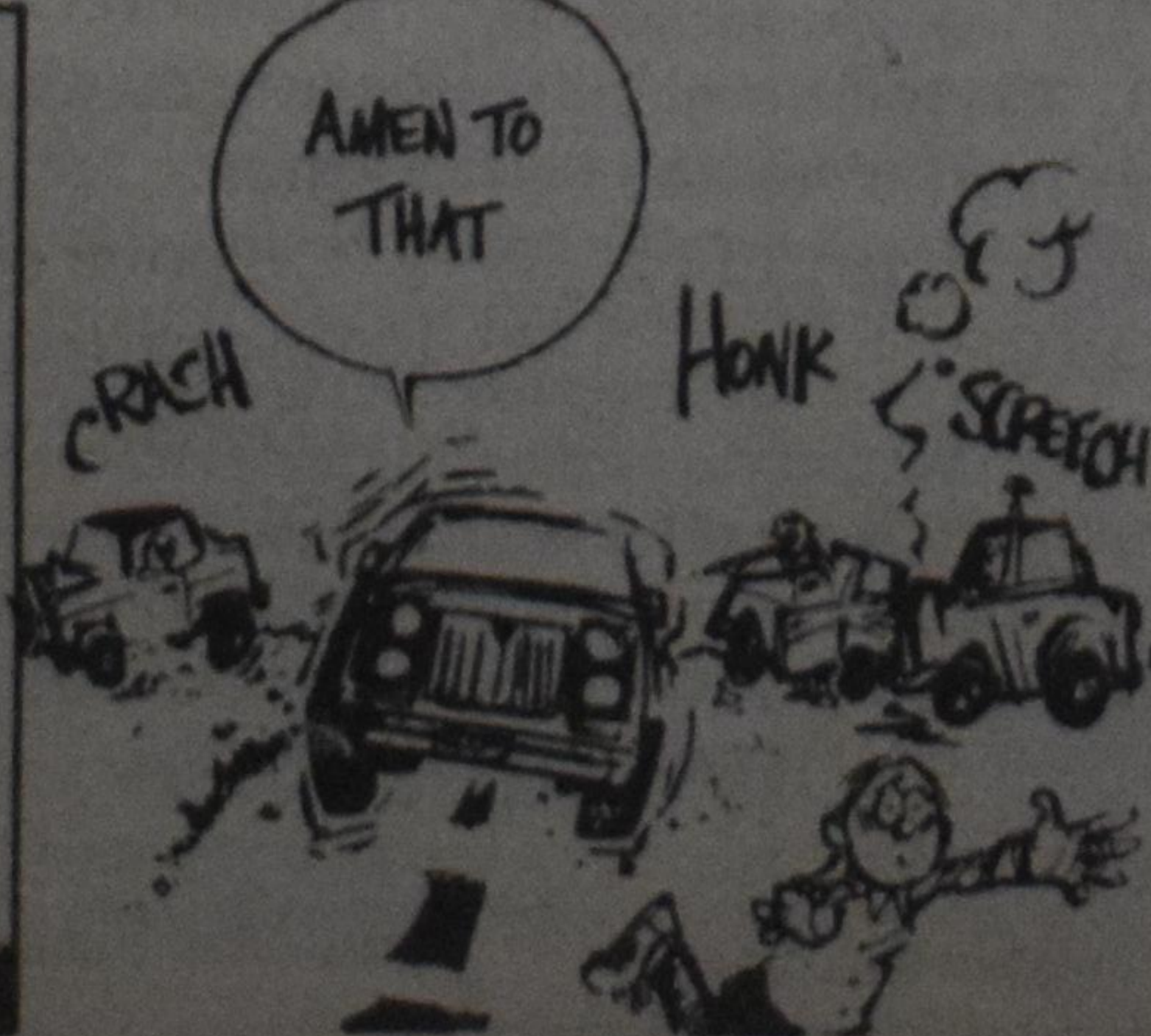
We tried to be fair, not just printing letters that agreed with our position. But there are times that one judges a letter not to be helpful in a debate. It has come to our attention that some readers love Calvinist Contact for its sensitive and careful presentation of opinion, but they dread the letter section. They find that the letter section sometimes shows an ugly side of the Reformed community.

It's true; some people don't know how to disagree in love. It seems as if as soon as they enter a debate they feel compelled to chop off the heads of their opponents. They think nothing of employing ridicule and sarcasm, and they melt their Bible texts into swords at the drop of a question.

And so we have barred ugly letters from the letters-to-the-editor pages. We try to be impartial but we are not called to be neutral. Our letter section, too, stands in the service of Jesus Christ and his Spirit.

BW

BEYOND BELIEF



Letters

No sacred/secular split in school day

Thank you kindly for allowing me to follow up on the coverage by your reporter Bill Fledderus ("Third group joins Jewish call for Ontario independent school funding" C.C. Jan. 17). Your readers obviously read carefully, for they have been asking some good questions about what could happen in this historic appeal that may, ultimately, be decided by the Supreme Court of Canada.

The Multi-Faith Coalition, which represents various faith communities (including Christians, Muslims and Sikhs), supports the legal challenge by the Canadian Jewish Congress. The challenge is based on the fundamental

freedoms and equality rights guaranteed in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. However, we wish to ensure that any remedy granted by the court will guarantee genuine equality and non-discrimination for *all* faith communities in the pluralistic mosaic of contemporary Ontario.

Our basis concern stems from the disturbing fact that the application by the Canadian Jewish Congress includes an "alternative" legal argument to the government funding of Jewish day schools. This approach would seek "an order (from the court) that the province of Ontario provide funds to the applicants and to all parents or families

of children in Jewish day schools in Ontario by means of a *per capita* grant or other system of funding to cover the *secular* portion of the education provided in those schools" (emphasis mine, GV).

The Multi-Faith Coalition does not agree with the popular "religious/secular" division as proposed by the Jewish Congress. The ideology of secularism is as much a religion as Christianity. Even the belief in neutrality is a religious belief. There is no such thing as non-religious education

that deserves public funding, with the rest being religion-based and not entitled to public funding.

Accordingly, the coalition feels duty-bound to become an intervenor and make a convincing case for the fair, non-discriminatory treatment of all faiths, all parents, all students, and all *bona fide* schools in Ontario.

Gerald Vandezande
Government Relations Coordinator
Multi-Faith Coalition For
Equity in Education
Agincourt, Ont.

Sometimes it's time to sever ties

Recently *Calvinist Contact* has published numerous letters and articles about "concerned" members leaving the Christian Reformed Church.

In response to this I would say that leaving the church can sometimes be an acceptable solution. There are times when everything that can be done to bring about unity has been done; all the issues have been raised; the conflict has been the subject of much prayer; people have read all the opposing views, re-examined the Bible texts; and both sides have been open and honest.

In spite of all these efforts the conflict can continue to persist year after year.

Young people begin leaving the church as the conflict becomes the focal point of congregational life. Partaking in Lord's Supper becomes difficult when members are bitter and refuse to talk to one another.

We must realize that after years of turmoil in a congregation it may be time to say, "If there is going to be a split, let's do it. There has been too much fighting already." In such situations people should be encouraged and supported and not made to feel guilt and shame for leaving the church and joining a new one.

Dean McRae
Whitby, Ont.

True love has a cross in the middle

I would like to comment on the answer which Peter and Marja gave to a single woman who seemingly has difficulties discerning rightly to whom she should give her true love. Even when we say that we love the Lord and want to do his will, it still is not easy to make the right decision because of our own desires and priorities. But if we want to walk in the footsteps of our Master, (as we should) than we must first try to acquire the mind of Christ.

The Rev. J. Overduin Sr. learned this in a concentration camp in Germany during the Second World War. In a meditation on John 3: 14-21 he writes: "There is cheap and there is expensive love in the world — namely love which is

cost-free, and love that costs everything, even life itself. Then the panorama of our lives becomes not blooming in love, but bleeding in love. That is love with a cross in the middle."

If the woman referred to *loves*, the grace and the Spirit of Christ dwells in her heart and then the choice of the questioner should not be difficult. She should withdraw from Phil and return to Brent. Then her life certainly will bear fruit, which is what our Master is waiting for. And that decision has the support of the Scripture passages which Peter and Marja have wisely brought to her attention.

Enno Ennema
Chatham, Ont.

How the needs of the deaf can be met

We have a deaf son and he watches TV and videos with the aid of a closed-captioned decoder. This is a box that we have purchased that inserts between the TV, VCR and the wire or cable. It lets the captioning that is available on much of prime time TV and videos produced in the last two to three years become visible as a line of type at the bottom of the screen. It is much like subtitles on foreign films.

Without this, the people on TV or videos are only mouthing words to him and he must guess at what they're saying. The closed-captioned decoder has opened the world to him. It is so much better than having someone sit by the TV and sign what is said or interpret it second hand.

We would ask that when you review videos for the paper that you include whether it is closed captioned. This can be found by a designation on the box of

the video of: CC or the symbol of an ear. There is so much that is not good on video that when we read a review of "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" by C.S. Lewis we would really like to know if this is closed captioned so our son can benefit from watching it. I will write to the producers of this film and ask them about captioning, but I write to you also to make you aware of needs that are there in the Christian community.

Most of what Hollywood has produced in recent years is closed captioned but, unfortunately, much Christian-produced material is sadly lacking in awareness of the needs of the deaf. We have written and will continue to write to Christian groups to increase this awareness.

Thank you for your attention to this.

Jack and Mary Jagt
Mississauga, Ont.

ROOFTOP MUSINGS/ALYCE OOSTERHUIS



The tyranny of the computer

In my lifetime I have relied extensively upon Remington, Underwood, IBM, Smith-Corona, and Canon typewriters to produce papers, letters, articles and theses. But I have never felt so bound to any of these writing instruments as I am beginning to feel tied to this XT hand-me-down computer terminal.

It seems as if every evening finds me sitting in front of this monitor, typing items with my four-fingered typing dexterity which never demanded typing before. Lectures which were previously written in outline form are now recorded permanently on my hard drive. Every column I have ever written can be recalled with the press of F5. Since I never delete anything, every version of every speech continues to be permanently stored. My computer not only seems to compel me to work every evening, it also confronts me with total recall of my past mistakes in print and thought.

Whoever claimed that the computer would make living easier, provide more free time for relaxation, enhance precision in thoughts and arguments, release writers from a dependence on copy editors and secretarial availability, never took into account the possibility of an eventual tyranny of the computer in our household.

Why have we let the computer dominate our lives so completely? I can muse about some of the reasons, and as I do I realize that it is not so much the computer that does the dominating as it is our own insecurities.

Obsessive precision

For one thing, the computer enables you to edit quickly and infinitely. One does not have to be precise the first, second, or third time one writes, because, after all, with a press of a few keys I can re-edit what did not quite sound right the first three times. Precision is a goal for the future; creativity is what counts right now. But when I reread, the brilliant late-evening intuitive flash sounds banal; the inspired words seem redundant; the logic of the argument wanders incoherently. If Moses had had a computer at his disposal for the writing of the Pentateuch, we may never have had the Creation story, or the Ten Commandments, or any of the words of the Old Testament because the words would still be undergoing refinements. Can you imagine the infinity of exegetical possibilities if Moses had also kept all his drafts of the documents on hard drive? Fortunately, Moses did not have a computer but a lot of divine assistance when he drafted those documents.

Maybe that's why the computer has become such a tyrant in our house. I keep hoping for the inspirational moment as I gaze at the monitor, assuming that divine assistance will come in the doing, forgetting that inspiration sometimes comes only after painfully waiting, stumbling, reflecting in the quiet moment.

The fan of my computer does not blow quietly; it exudes more of a factory noise that demands action and piecemeal production. And as I listen to its noise I realize how dreadfully intrusive an influence this machinery has become in our lives. It's time to take control and shake off the demands for perfection: time to communicate and have dialogue with *people* rather than with the too-many versions of the same script on the screen.

Alyce Horzelenberg Oosterhuis is assistant professor of education and psychology at The King's College in Edmonton.

Cinema summaries

Marian Van Til

Prince of Tides

Rated AA

Stars Nick Nolte, Barbra Streisand, Blythe Danner, Kate Nelligan, Jeroen Krabbe, Jason Gould, Melinda Dillon. Screenplay by Pat Conroy. Produced and directed by Barbra Streisand.



Viewers and critics alike are suggesting that Nick Nolte will (or should) win an Oscar for his portrayal of Tom Wingo in this film, and they're undoubtedly right. The role is demanding primarily because its emotional range is so broad and intense; and it requires a southern U.S.

accent — the Wingos live on a coastal island off the Carolinas.

The film begins in the past. Tom muses in the starting narration that when he was very young he believed his mother was the most perfect creature on earth. But "there have been many other sons who've made that mistake," he adds sadly. We then see the three Wingo children — Tom, his older brother Luke, and younger sister Savannah — escape their parents' frequent explosive quarrels by plunging together fully clothed, linked hand to hand, eyes open, off the end of their pier. Their few minutes together in the clear, silent sea until their breath runs out seems to act as a balm for each of them.

Separate worlds

We're then brought to the present. Savannah has long since escaped to New York City but she hasn't been able to face life any better there than she could in the South. She has just tried to commit suicide — again. We learn, too, that strong, rebellious Luke is already dead, killed in a tragic shooting.

Their divorced mother, now married to a wealthy southern "gentleman," is too preoccupied with her own life to fly to New York to check on her daughter. And it wouldn't occur to anyone that Tom's emotionally brittle and abusive father (old now, but still an active commercial fisherman) would make the trip. So Tom goes alone.

Tom begins to meet with his sister's psychiatrist, Susan Lowenstein. Savannah hasn't been a patient long so Dr. Lowenstein doesn't yet know what's at the bottom of the suicide attempt. Tom hates New York and is skeptical of Lowenstein. But she is adept at getting him to talk. He becomes, in effect, Savannah's memory, filling in what she has blocked out. In the process Tom's own unacknowledged wounds are exposed. Estranged from his wife, able to feel almost nothing, and consequently at a dead end in his own life, Tom unwittingly falls in love with Lowenstein as she helps him learn to feel again. (A major sub-plot involves the doctor and Tom, her teen-aged son and her violinist husband.)

Demons exorcised

Tom uncovers the Wingo demons and they begin to be purged. He learns that acknowledging the devastating mistakes his parents made does not mean he must hate them. And he learns the same applies to himself and his own foul-ups. That new self-knowledge and acceptance results in a desire to refuel his own marriage.

Prince of Tides could have been an awful movie. There are potential pitfalls all over the place when a film jumps on the bandwagon of the latest social or psychological trend, however legitimate that trend may be — in this case, the discovery that one's family was or is "dysfunctional." But *Prince of Tides* sidesteps those traps. It avoids the jargon of pop psychology and the touchy-feely psychologizing of its characters' every action or thought.

What viewers feel is *genuine* emotion from characters who are authentic, enigmatic and complex — as real people are. And because we feel them to be real, we care about what happens to them. Achieving that reaction in an audience is perhaps one of the most obvious signs that a film has done its job well.

There is a point here, however, when that dissipates. Director Barbra Streisand (who also plays Lowenstein) keeps the film tightly on track until near the end when she just can't resist the urge to be self-indulgent, prolonging the romance between Tom and Lowenstein. The film then quite uncharacteristically degenerates into sentimentality. This extraordinary and moving film could have, and should have, taken the high road in that regard by resisting the expectation that a man and a woman must be *sexually* attracted to each other; or by dealing with Tom and Lowenstein's sexual attraction without consummating it. Then, I believe, it would be a true classic.

Film/Music Reviews

Willem van Suijdam 4

Marian Van Til

Willem van Suijdam, organ
Henk-Jan Drost and Herman Drost, trumpets
Bert Koelewijn, piano

Recorded by Dolph Thierry and Herman Reijers for STH at the Eusebius Church, Arnhem, the Netherlands. Compact disc available from The Music Group for Church Music & Records, Box 154, Neerlandia, Alta., T0G 1R0.

If you believe the organ is still the King of Instruments, if you're a hymn and psalm lover, and if you appreciate classical music to an extent but aren't a connoisseur, then this is the recording for you. That's not to say you *won't* like it if you are highly musically literate. But the artists here, in the words of one of them, trumpet player Herman Drost, "want to play music that ordinary (church) people can relate to, variations on psalms and hymns, as well as easy listening classical music." And he adds, "The great trumpet works we leave to the professionals."

To be sure, this is a popularized and "Romantic" presentation; that is, the musical style in which it is wrapped shows many of the elements of 19th-century Romanticism: lush, often chromatic harmonies; ornate, arpeggiated piano parts (i.e., broken chords played rapidly); warm, thick organ registrations; the combining of the timbres of piano and organ. Even works of the Baroque (Handel and Bach), whose hallmark might be summarized with the one word *crisp*, are "warmed up" here. But never to the extent that the pieces lose their character or become unlistenable by those who love the straightforward vitality of Baroque music. In short, this is romanticism which most "ordinary" listeners will love and which most musicians can embrace as well.

Contemplation and exuberance

There are a number of effective, quietly contemplative pieces among the 16 works on this 68½-minute CD: Genevan Psalm 116 by H. Hoeve; "Songs of Israel," arranged by Herman Drost and Bert Koelewijn; one of Mendelssohn's "Lieder Ohne Worte" for piano; "Thanks be to God" — called here "Thanked Be the Lord" — set to Handel's famous Largo from "Xerxes"; "Take My Life and Let It Be" ("Neem mijn leven laat het Heer") arranged by Bert Koelewijn.

In contrast there are works of more exuberance, quicker tempo, or greater majesty (trumpet and organ together can never help sounding regal).

Along that line, the CD begins with a powerful setting of "God of Our Fathers" arranged by pianist Koelewijn. Next comes a stately version of "All Creatures of Our God and King" arranged by B. Dunford. On the fourth track, Van Suijdam spiritedly plays Bach's "Little" Prelude and Fugue in B Minor. Other hymns include Handel's tune "Thine is the Glory," the Dutch folk tune "Kremser" which we know as "We Praise Thee, O God, Our Redeemer Creator," and the German chorale "Jesus Meine Zuversicht" ("Jesus is Our Sure Defense") arranged by Feike Asma.

This CD is well-produced and contains informative notes about the performers and the organ, though no notes about the music itself. Particularly pleasing (and, I think, absolutely necessary on organ recordings) is the inclusion of the organ's specifications. The playing time of each piece is, however, not given — a minor irritation, though many CD players can tell you that as you

play the disc.

Can't feel that sound

Van Suijdam, who immigrated to Canada from the Netherlands in 1986, chose well when he decided to record in Arnhem's Eusebius Church. The three-manual organ was built in 1796 by Strumphler and moved to Arnhem from a Lutheran church in Amsterdam after World War II (Eusebius' original organ was destroyed during the war). The church's echo is splendid and the brilliance of the organ and trumpets comes through well. But the low end of the scale doesn't. Though it is admittedly difficult to record organ music because of the instrument's huge pitch range, there's not nearly enough bass presence here. At least some of the thrill of feeling an organ rumble, vibrating its surroundings, should come through on a recording, and very little does here. All in all, though, this is a pleasant recording that should bear up to repeated listenings.



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Application forms can be obtained from the office of the C.F. of C.R. Women, P.O. Box 335, Grimsby, ON L3M 4H8. Application forms must be returned before April 1, 1992.

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Church

Marian Van Til, page editor

Niagara classis sends out strong message to troubled churches

Bert Witvoet

FRUITLAND, Ont. — Maybe it was the location that shaped the outcome, but Classis Niagara of the Christian Reformed Church, one of the classes most troubled by secession, had what many observers considered a very fruitful meeting on Jan. 22. The time for action had come and act the classis did.

More than 30 motions were passed, several of them dealing with the matter of dissension in the churches. First of all, a motion that was wrongly defeated by a tie vote at a previous meeting was re-examined.

A new motion was passed that "Classis Niagara affirms

that on Oct. 3, 1991, the Trinity [St. Catharines] and Riverside [Wellandport] delegates should have abstained from voting on the motion 'Classis declares that the decisions of Trinity's and Wellandport's councils to leave the CRC are unwarranted and unacceptable on biblical, confessional and pastoral grounds.' " The ground was that, according to Article 34 of the Church Order, "A delegate shall not vote on any matter in which he himself or his church is particularly involved."

A second motion, which also carried, reversed the decision of Oct. 3, and put Classis Niagara on record as declaring that the secessions by the majority of Trinity and

Riverside churches were unwarranted and unacceptable on biblical, confessional and pastoral grounds.

Church officers can't rightly sow secession

Classis further acquiesced "with regret and sadness" in the official resignation of Rev. Calvin Tuininga and in the *de facto* resignation of Rev. Joghinda Gangar from the office of minister of the Word in the CRC and dismissed them from their office.

For the future, Classis declared that "any officebearer who, for reasons that are unwarranted and unacceptable on biblical, confessional and pastoral

grounds, announces his intention to secede from the denomination and urges others to leave is subject to special discipline." Classis further mandated its church visitors and the Classical Interim Committee as needed:

1. to aid those members who, belonging to any congregation in Classis, request advice and help dealing with other members and office bearers who advocate leaving the CRC.

2. to advise congregations and councils in dealing with those who feel conscience-bound to separate from the CRC, in order that these painful matters may be dealt with in a constructive manner.

3. and to assist those who struggle with recent synodical decisions, are uncertain about the issue of leaving the denomination, and request their assistance. All with due acknowledgement of the local council.

Rev. Ralph Koops, speaking on behalf of the synodical deputies, commended Niagara Classis for sending out such a strong message to the whole denomination and encouraged the delegates to work for unity.

MARS to move orbit to Chicago

Marian Van Til

ORANGE CITY, Iowa — The board of trustees of Mid-America Reformed Seminary (MARS) in Orange City, Iowa, has announced plans to relocate the seminary in the Chicago area. The decision was made at the institution's Jan. 22-23 board meeting. The move from this small rural town to the vicinity of the U.S.'s third largest city will be made "in order better to fulfill [Mid-America's] goal to serve a broad range of Reformed and

Presbyterian churches in an increasing[ly] urban world," says a statement released by MARS.

Director of development Greg Eddings, a native of Texas and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, reiterates that the Chicago area's central location, and a support base there, especially in the southeast suburbs and in northwest Indiana, were considerations in the decision. He also admits that added convenience for Canadian

students and potential students (most of whom come from Ontario) was a factor. Five of Mid-America's current 14 students are Canadians.

In making the announcement the seminary was careful to acknowledge the support of its local Iowa constituents. Board president Richard Blauw (himself from southern California) said, "We thank everyone in this region for their faithful support in the past and we trust God that we will continue to enjoy that

support during the time of transition and after the actual move."

A committee will work out details such as site, time table of the move and financing.

Mid-America held its first classes in 1981. It has four full-time professors, three of whom are ordained as ministers of the Christian Reformed Church (CRC). The seminary was begun as a conservative and, supporters say, a more biblical alternative to the perceived liberalism of CRC-run Calvin

Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids, Mich. MARS students, 80 per cent of whom are CRC members Greg Eddings estimates, must complete a year of studies at Calvin Seminary (as must students from all other seminaries) in order to be ordained in the CRC. This requirement as well as various theological issues continue to be bones of contention between the two institutions.

Missionaries are ordinary people, students learn

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (Christian Reformed World Missions) — Ask a student on any campus what a missionary is and he or she may be tempted to use stereotypical descriptions like sandals, long beard, eccentric, and of course, very holy.

But students should look around. There are missionaries, and potential missionaries, among them in classes, at the cafeteria, and yes, even at the basketball game. Welcome to Reality 101: missionaries are ordinary people.

This was the lesson learned by some 39 Christian college students over the past three summers who travelled overseas with Christian Reformed World Missions as part of their Summer Mission Program (SMP). The program started in 1989 with its own mission to give students hands-on experience in cross-cultural evangelism. World Missions is now accepting applications for the 1992 program.

Enlightened by program

"My stereotypes were not like some others because my parents had been missionaries

in Nigeria," says Tim Holwerda, a Calvin Seminary student who went with his wife, Tammy, to the Philippines in 1990. "But my wife was funny because she thought missionaries wore polyester suits and greeted you in a foreign language. We all found out that missionaries are ordinary people who can have fun and don't necessarily have life by the tail either."

Such enlightenment about missions and missionaries is what World Missions has in mind for its Summer Mission Program.

"Almost every missions agency has or is exploring something like SMP as part of its ministry in order to get young people involved in missions," explains Abe Vreeke, training assistant for World Missions, based in Grand Rapids, Michigan. "We want to make young people aware of and comfortable with World Missions."

In the past, SMP participants have come from colleges like Calvin, Dordt, Redeemer, Trinity, Trinity Western, Kings College, and the Reformed Bible College.

Students in past summers have gone to Nigeria, Japan,

and Mali to work as teachers, evangelists, builders, secretaries, and in music performance. Their involvement has directly benefitted missionaries and the national churches. Students also gain.

"Their global vision will be enlarged, their ministry skills will improve, and their sense of God's calling in cross-cultural evangelism will be sharpened," says Gord Buys, whose job it is to recruit missionaries for World Missions.

"For all of our team of eight who went to the Philippines it confirmed that we wanted to get into missions, or it confirmed that we didn't want to get into it," says Holwerda, who is considering an internship with World Missions and possibly a career in missions. "All around, you can't lose for the experience. It broadened our vision of missions and the world."

Any students interested in sharing such an experience can get an application from Christian Reformed World Missions, 2850 Kalamazoo Avenue SE, Grand Rapids, MI, 49560, or call 616-246-0700. Applications must be in to World Missions by February 15, 1992.

A rookie's prayer

Gerrit Damsma

Donald is an elder in the church. Has been one for years: four years on, four years off. And he can pray so nice, they say, that you can feel goosepimples running up and down your arms. Especially at council meetings or when he is serving-elder. Before the Sanhedrin marches into church it is customary to offer up a prayer in the council room.

That's a fine custom, but Donald can hardly resist the temptation to deliver a substantial sermon while his eyes are closed. Words roll over his tongue like dimes across a counter. That's got to be pleasing to our dear Lord in heaven. One either has the gift of speech or one doesn't. The whole congregation with all its connections and occupations is touched upon in his prayer. He has a tendency to expose sinners in a strange sort of way. There's no end to the list of items that need to be brought to the Lord's attention before the service can properly start. Years ago the little mission negro would nod its head, thankful for every red penny that was dropped through the slot. Up in heaven they must really be nodding their heads with all these dimes rolling in among the pennies.

Compared to Donald, Pete is a dwarf. But, okay, he has just recently been elected youth elder. He's a rookie. Pete dreads the thought of having to pray on behalf of the whole shebang and of having "to bring the pastor to the throne of grace." His knees are a bit wobbly this morning because it's his turn. Donald catches on as to what's happening. He smiles: this is going to be a fiasco.

Pete stammers a prayer about unsure, little people in a huge world, and that "we, just like little children, may play close to Father's house, so that we may hear your voice and may understand it. Amen."

When Pete walks the pastor to the pulpit, he gets a firm handshake and the pastor whispers: "Thanks, Pete."

And in heaven an angel says to the Lord: "That was Pete." "I know that name," says the Lord. "Peter! On this kind of people I have built and I shall build my church."

Translated from Frisian by Bert Witvoet.

son, be adm
many books *there is no end; and*
much study *is a weariness of the*
flesh.

Bible Notebook

Ac. 19. 19.
Reading, Da. 5. 1.
Or, much reading.
p.p.ch. 1. 18.

Al Wolters

'Bed' or 'staff'? (II)

"... Upon the head of his bed" (Gen. 47: 31 RSV)
"... Over the head of his staff" (Heb. 11: 21 RSV).

In my previous column I pointed out that the discrepancy between "bed" and "staff" in these two verses can be explained if we realize that Hebrew was written without vowels. Consequently, the original writing of Gen. 47: 31 was *mittah*, which could be read as either *mittah* (bed) or *matteh* (staff). The Greek version which is quoted by the apostle in Heb. 11:21 chose the second option, but the medieval Jewish scholars who added vowels to the text of the Hebrew Bible chose the first option. What are we to make of this discrepancy?

Calvin's view

It is instructive to note how Calvin dealt with this question in his commentary on Hebrews. When he comes to Heb. 11:21, he writes: "this is one of the places which warrant the hypothesis that vowel-points were not used among the Hebrews in former times," and he explains about the difference between *mittah* and *matteh*. Calvin himself is convinced that the correct reading is "bed," and he explains that the apostle quotes the version with "staff" only to accommodate himself to his readers.

Why was Calvin so sure that "bed" was the right reading? The answer is that he had considerable confidence in the vowel-points which we find in the traditional Hebrew Bible (the so-called Masoretic text), and placed more reliance on them than on the early Greek translation (the Septuagint) which the apostle quotes. Although Calvin never went so far as to claim that the vowel-points of the Masoretic text were part of the inspired text of Scripture, some of his followers did, and there is a Reformed confession of the 17th century which actually adopted the position that the Masoretic vowels were inspired.

For Calvin, therefore, and for most biblical scholars of his time and later, the discrepancy between "bed" and "staff" was simply allowed to stand, even though the former was considered correct. Consequently, almost all translations of the Bible have "bed" in Genesis and "staff" in Hebrews.

Harmonization in the NIV

However, there is one exception to this general rule. The New International Version has harmonized the two texts. The translators have changed the vocalization of the Masoretic text of Gen. 47:31 from *mittah* to *matteh*, so that it now matches the quotation in Heb. 11:21. Both verses now speak of "staff," and "bed" has been relegated to a footnote on the former.

Should we agree with Calvin or the NIV on this matter? In my opinion, there are two issues to be distinguished here, and on one Calvin is right, and on the other the NIV is right. The first issue is that of minor or apparent discrepancies in the text of Scripture. I think Calvin was right in letting such discrepancies stand and not trying to explain them away. If the NIV translators changed the vocalization of *mittah* in Gen. 47:31 because they were uncomfortable with the discrepancy between "bed" and "staff," then I believe they were working with an unbiblical notion of inspiration. There are in fact many variations in wording in different parts of Scripture and we must accept Scripture as it presents itself.

The second issue is that of the status of the vowel-points in the Masoretic text. I think that the NIV translators are right in claiming the right, when a good case can be made, to change the vowels of the traditional Hebrew text. After all, these vowels were added hundreds of years after the biblical text was first written down and there was nothing infallible about the Jewish oral tradition on which these vowels are based.

In short, the choice between reading *mittah* (bed) or *matteh* (staff) in Gen. 47:31 should be made on quite different grounds. I personally think the former is more likely, simply because a dying man is more likely to bend over the head of his bed than over the head of his staff.

Al Wolters teaches religion/theology and classical languages at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.

How to grow a Sunday school

Marilyn D. Brenden

As a Sunday school outreach director, I employed an effective procedure to reach inactive and unchurched children in our community. We simply followed our current students' natural webs of family and friends to build our Sunday school. After three years of consistently applying these methods, our weekly attendance had doubled.

Here are some simple steps you can follow to do the same thing:

* Appoint a person who is not a Sunday school teacher to collect information from each visitor. Choose a person who can arrive 15 minutes early each week.

This outreach person should talk to each visitor, preferably before the class begins, or keep the visitor and host student after class for just a minute. On an index card, record the name, address, telephone number, date of visit, and the names of the visitor's parents or guardians. Ask for the names of brothers and sisters, and inquire if the young person attends another church. Transfer this information into the church computer if you have one. (If not, a file box will maintain the records just as well.) Use only one file card per family, listing all of the children on it.

* If the visitor is not involved in another church, write a follow-up postcard and mail it to the child the *same day*. We sent picture postcards featuring colourful religious cartoons and wrote the simple message, "We enjoyed having you visit at Sunday school. Come again and bring a friend." The cards were signed "Your Friends At Trinity Church," and were always addressed to the child rather than his or her parents.

* Make a duplicate file card for each visitor and give it to the minister or the head of your evangelism committee on the same day. You'll need to work out a procedure regarding how he or she wants to receive the cards since Sunday mornings are typically a busy time. This immediate sharing of information enables the minister or evangelism committee to learn quickly of the child's involvement and allows the person to include the family in designated times for phone calls or home visits this week.

* Send follow-up postcards for at least the first three Sundays the child attends. If the attendance of the child is sporadic, send a follow-up postcard every time the child attends, varying the message each time but always including the reminder to bring a friend.

* Do not send "We Missed You" cards to absent children. Such cards, rather than

encouraging the unchurched child to return, often have just the opposite effect. When concerned about absent children, it is better to make a friendly visit to the home. Don't go with the goal of inviting the child to Sunday school but simply seek to become better acquainted with the family.

* Treat your file box or computer records as a precious resource. Do not allow cards to be taken out of the box or fail to enter any visitor's data into the computer.

* Your files should include a complete record of all possible Sunday school students, including the inactive ones, as well as all visitors for the past several years.

* "Work" your Sunday school file. Each time you hold special events for children such as parties, outings or Vacation Bible school, invite prospects to participate by means of postcards, phone calls or visits. Encourage current students to bring friends or relatives to these events.

* Designate a person to collect information from each of the visitors at the event, and see that the minister gets a copy of these cards, too. Send follow-up postcards to all of the visitors who are not church members elsewhere. (We were very scrupulous about not engaging in "sheep stealing," believing that the practice

contributes neither to the growth of the child nor to the Body of Christ.)

* After three visits by the child to Sunday school or church events, ask the church secretary to add the family to the church mailing list. This step is very important because you want to start informing the family about the church. Note "mailing list" on your computer records or file card when this has been done.

* As you continue to reach out, always remember that the goal is to get entire families involved. It is especially important to build social and spiritual bonds with the parents or guardians so that the children do not drift away after a time because of lack of family involvement or support.

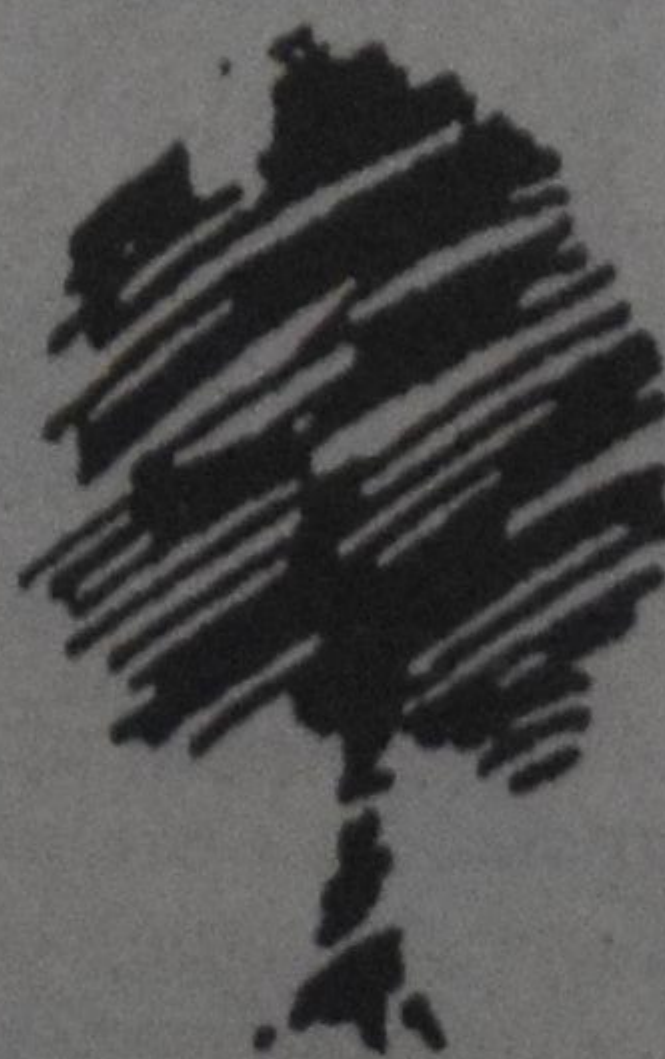
Our Lord said, "Let the children come to me and do not stop them, because the Kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these" (Matt. 19: 14 TEV). By applying these methods, you can have a positive impact in introducing more young people to the world's greatest lover of children.

Marilyn D. Brenden is a public school teacher and a Christian writer and speaker. Most recently she has served as consultant editor of the *Caring For Inactive Members: How To Make God's House A Home curriculum* written by Dr. Kenneth C. Haugk, executive director of Stephen Ministries, St. Louis, Mo.



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Those presently receiving aid should reapply. Completed application forms should be received by April 1, 1992.

Features

Greta

In 1990 Mins Reinsma first introduced us to 13-year-old Greta, her parents (recent Dutch immigrants), their free-spirited neighbour Eileen, and various others in their small Washington state community near Vancouver.

This story uses these same characters and contains some of young Greta's wise observations.

Mins Reinsma

Before getting out of bed I already knew that it was raining again. I could hear the familiar and somewhat cozy patter on the roof of our house. In the northwestern United States, rainy weather at this time of the year is nothing unusual, especially not on Whidbey Island. When we emigrated two years ago from Holland to this wonderful island on the coast of Washington state, we were warned about the rain, as if we had never seen rain in Holland.

When I looked out of my bedroom window I saw our neighbour, Mr. Bruinsma, waddle through his backyard to check his rain gauge. I like watching him because he reminds me of some of the Dickens characters. Mr. Bruinsma is very short and very round. He always has a red nose and red cheeks; from the outside he looks cuddly. I know exactly what will happen next. First, he looks at the sky — which is not very friendly — as if he is addressing the Lord with some wordless comments. Then he stares at the rain gauge and lifts it out of the stand. While emptying the gauge his lips begin to move, the speed depending on the amount of rain that has collected in the gauge.

My father says that he is a terrible grump, but my mother finds him "interesting." My mother places all people in just two groups: you are either "wonderful" or you are "interesting." When I asked her once about the difference, she said, "'Wonderful' is a word full of beauty and promise, and 'interesting' is a word that does not judge."

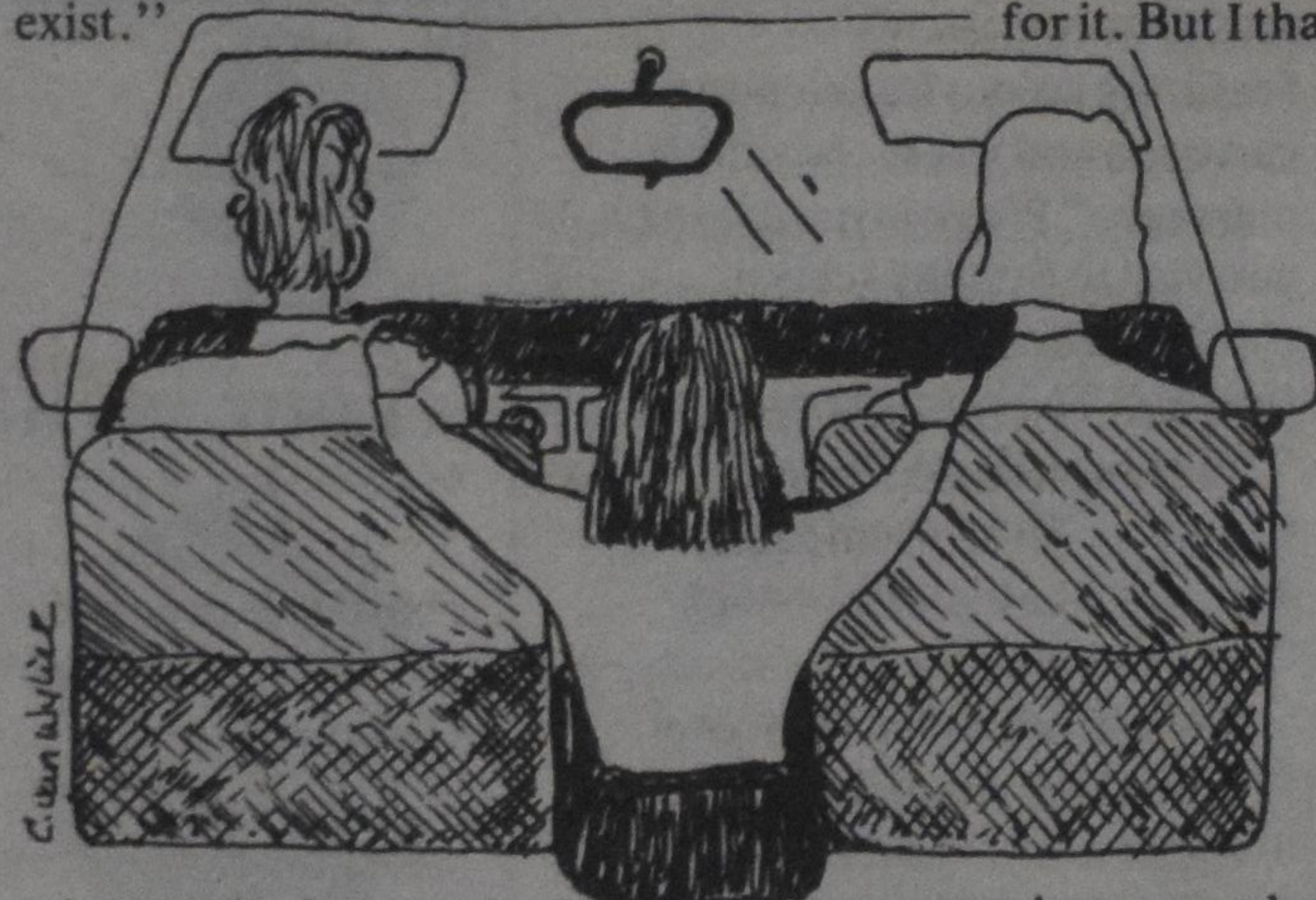
"Wonderful" was one of the first words my mother learned when we came to America. She liked this word right away and uses it all the time, somewhat the way we use the word *lekker* in Holland. My parents have done rather well learning to speak English. Neither one can, of course, say the "th," but that is not surprising. A good many people in our church who have lived here for ages still talk about "the bird of Jesus and the tree wisemen."

A few days ago, maybe because of all the rain, I read to Eileen, our divorced neighbour, the story of Noah and the flood — my mother and I

still evangelize her. Eileen like the story but she did not believe that it could have happened. Luckily, or by providence, I had just read an article in *The Readers Digest* about the warming of the earth and the rising of the oceans, and I tried to explain the flood with the help of this information.

Eileen said, "Greta, darling" — Eileen calls everyone, man or woman, boy or girl, "darling" — "leave the story alone. You are just ruining it."

I talked to my teacher about what I had said and about Eileen's comments. Miss King told me not to try to explain the miracles in the Bible in human terms because that is impossible. But more important, not ever to make God into a magician. "Always look at God as a creator," she said, "never as a performer. A performer is at best an expert, but a creator causes things to exist."



Interestingly enough, the sermon the next Sunday was about another miracle, the one about the loaves and the fishes. I don't remember much about the sermon because I was counting the squares on the organ screen again. (There are 214 and not 216, as Bert Klein bet me.) The last song of the service was one of the new hymns: "Magnify the Lord." During the singing of this hymn, Mrs. Van Slooten raised her hands. This is done occasionally in our church but never before by the minister's wife. I noticed my dad looked very uneasy.

On the way home my parents had an argument about the service. They don't argue very often, but when they do it is really interesting to watch. I always look at my mother's face first because when she gets those tiny ripples around her mouth and her eyes I know that she is having some fun with what she is saying.

It always surprises me that my father never notices that; he charges right in and never looks at her face. He also starts to speak very loudly and, of course, all of this is in Dutch.

When I got in the back of the car I saw it coming. Looking straight ahead, rather grim, he said, "I cannot stand that arm waving by all those people in church any longer; and singing those silly, ditty songs from the so-called *New Hymnal* is ridiculous. I am going to the consistory to complain."

My mother said, "Watch that red stoplight, Jorgan."

Dad went right on, "And to make things worse, at times, people are just laughing; and that in church. There is no more reverence; church has become a *bijeenkomst* (a "gathering"). If my father knew what was going on lately, he would...." And he made a motion with his hand.

"Jorgan," my mother interrupted, "your father is probably waving his arms — as you put it — this very moment in heaven. He is praising the Lord just the same as some people did this morning. Besides that, the people do not wave their arms. They raise their arms in reverence and adoration to God, our God, Jorgan; yours and mine and Greta's — the God of all his people."

"So, why don't you raise your arms?" my father said with an edge in his voice. "I have no need for it," my mother answered. "If I felt that it would bring me closer to God I would do it every time the song or the service called for it. But I thank the Lord for people

the road ahead of him, I realized how much I love both my parents but how different they are in their thinking and doing and loving and caring. From the back seat I put one hand on my mother's shoulder and one on my father's. Nothing more was said until we reached the house.

When we entered the door, my father looked at my mother. He smiled just a little and said, "As you noticed, Anne, I have not even mentioned the hand clapping." My mother laughed and said, "Jorgan, I am going to give you a rain gauge for Christmas. It will be the perfect *bliksem afleider* ("Lightning rod") for you."

It is fun to watch my parents in an argument — or "expressing a difference of opinion," as my mother puts it — if you know for sure that there is no hardness or darkness in their words. It was not the first time that the discussion centred around church or church affairs. My father always talks or complains about the changes in the worship service. He used to bring the Dutch church into the argument, but that was a losing proposition. My mother loves the church in America and any comparison to the Dutch church makes even my father see that comparing the two does not strengthen his argument.

I always had a difficult time figuring out what all the fuss was about. I don't see much change in the worship service. Well, maybe a new song from time to time. And a little hand clapping. When I asked my mother about this she said, "Greta, it is like living in a house that is somewhat stuffy. So you open a window to let in some fresh air, but some people in the house don't feel the fresh air. They only feel a draft and are afraid of catching a cold."

My father would never, not in a million years, come up with an answer like that.

I know through my reading and conversations that there is a difference between women and men more so than, you know, in the body. Women and girls seem to have more sense than men. They think and act and love different. I am glad that I am a woman, like my mother.

Bert Klein dropped by today. He wanted to borrow *The Red Badge of Courage*. I like Bert; he is a reader. My mother likes him because he has a nice smile; my father likes him because he has a huge paper route.

Yesterday between rain showers I sat for a few minutes on the bench near the water. When I sit there I always think about Mr. De Boer who died sitting on this very bench and who spoke his last words to me. I always look up into the sky, like he used to do, and say, "Hi, Mr. De Boer; how are you doing up there?" I tell no one, of course, that I do this. People would say this is silly — or irreverent. But to me, it keeps an old friend close in my memory and in my thoughts.

Wietse G. Posthumus

I have been encountering a number of questions concerning the business of incorporating local churches. In addition, I have come across various problems that relate to incorporation and other problems caused by the fact that a local church was not legally incorporated. Recently there have been schisms in a number of churches, raising serious questions as to property rights and possible legal action. This article highlights some of the more salient points of concern.

Let me begin by saying that incorporating a church gives it a separate legal identity apart from its members. In fact, a corporation is said to have all the legal powers and rights of a person. While this may be too broadly stated, the fact remains that as a church incorporated the congregation becomes a separate and distinct legal entity. It can hold and own property, enter into contracts, sue and be sued and generally have the legal rights and obligations applicable to any other person.

A local congregation as an incorporated church therefore exists legally as a unit and not a mere collection of individuals. It can buy, sell, mortgage or have financial dealings by acting through its directors chosen by its members. Directors and members change, but the corporation remains. Its activity is legally carried out pursuant to resolutions passed by the board of directors. Some acts of corporation require the prior approval of the membership before the directors can or should act on their own.

When a local church is not incorporated it can only hold land in the name of one or more trustees. A common practice in the Canadian wing of the Christian Reformed Church was to register property in the name of one or more elders of the church (one of whom was often the minister). Years later, when the congregation wished to sell or mortgage the property, it would be discovered that the elder in whose name the property was registered was deceased and the minister (the other trustee) had long since transferred to a church in another province. Clearly, continuity of ownership is both practical and efficient.

The Christian Reformed Church in North America has long recommended that local churches be incorporated and has on various occasions set out at least some provisions and conditions which should bind such corporations by being included in its constituting documents (letters patent and By-Law No. 1).

A corporation, as I have stated, acts through its board

of directors. The directors in turn are governed by the by-laws as to the manner and method of reaching and carrying out decisions. The letters patent, an official, legal, government document brings the corporation into existence. It usually spells out the objects and purposes of the corporation. Thus the corporation is limited only by the governing provisions of its constituting documents.

By-laws define duties

Most corporations use a standard by-law which sets out how the directors are elected, and once elected, what the powers are of the board of directors and its officers, i.e., president, secretary. By-Law No. 1 will contain numerous provisions relating to the nature, description and purpose of the corporation, including conditions for membership, qualifications for directors, the manner in which shareholders' (or membership) meetings are conducted, and conditions that must be satisfied before the corporation can reach or implement decisions of its board of directors. The by-law sets out the powers of the board of directors and prescribes the limits (if any) on those powers.

The Christian Reformed Church through its synod has also prescribed certain requirements that should apply to each church corporation, including property rights *vis a vis* the denomination and the definition and practice to be followed in the event of a schism.

Clearly the standard by-laws used for business corporations do not apply to a local church. In addition, the church as a charitable corporation is subject to numerous distinct and separate qualifications and regulations that do not apply to a business corporation. Many of the rules applicable to charities must be garnered from common law principles and precedent which loosely defines by example appropriate

charitable purposes and practice.

There is no codification of the law as it applies to charities. Provincial requirements are scattered about and changing. Recently the Office of the Public Trustee has taken over the scrutinizing and approval of all applications for incorporating a charitable corporation in Ontario. Revenue Canada, by way of the Income Tax Act, has its own requirements and sets its own conditions for granting a church charitable status for the purpose of receiving gifts.

There are a number of conflicts that arise naturally between church practices and expediency and the technical legal requirements and procedures allowing a charitable corporation to exist and carry on its activities. Understandably, the church would like to have its custom and practice prevail. The state, on the other hand, wishes to have the last word as to the proper practice and conduct of a charitable corporation (a creature of the state) and of its directors. The Office of the Public Trustee sees the directors of a charitable corporation as a type of trustee, with trustee-like accountability to the members.

Usually the church will want its council members to function in the capacity of directors of the corporation as well. The corporation, through its directors and officers accepts responsibility for all legal contracts, money and property concerns of the church, including insuring that all

monies received are property distributed in accordance with Revenue Canada requirements, thereby enabling it to issue charitable donation receipts to the members.

A church is not a business

These various concerns must be addressed by way of the by-laws of the corporation. Many lawyers are not familiar with charitable organizations and the laws and provisions regulating them. Most lawyers never have occasion to deal with non-share capital corporations and are entirely unfamiliar with the incorporating of churches. Even more lawyers are totally unfamiliar with church practices, customs and concerns, and clients too often fail to advise their lawyers of the requirements of the denomination.

As a result, many of our churches are incorporated simply (probably cheaply) by filing the necessary forms with the proper government Ministry, ordering a minute book and inserting in it a "By-Law No. 1" purchased from "Dye & Durham" for less than \$100. The result of this is that you have business corporation by-laws operating the affairs of the church without any thought having been given to the nature of the organization.

Church incorporations are desirable, practical and

efficient. However, the act of incorporating and the drafting of the necessary by-laws, requires a careful and detailed consideration of a myriad of concerns. Often churches will take various approaches. Should a church by-law, for instance, limit the directors to male members of the church? Are the members to be the confessing members of the church only? What about persons who regularly attend, are over 18 and faithfully give to the church? Can they vote? What percentage of the membership should constitute a quorum? Can, or should, the pastor be a director? (The pastor probably should be a non-voting director only). Can a church give notice of a meeting by simply placing a notice in the bulletin for two successive Sundays (church law), or should each member receive written notification (corporate law)? What are to be the duties and authority of the officers? Must all officers also be directors? Should all council members be on the board of directors? How are conflicts between legal requirements and church practice to be resolved?

These and numerous other questions require detailed and individual consideration.

20/20
hindsight

Continued on p. 12...

'DECENTLY AND IN GOOD ORDER': THE INCORPORATING OF CHURCHES

News

Plans to mark Canada's 125th anniversary disclosed

OTTAWA (Canadian Scene) — Claude Dupras and Frank King have announced an initial series of community and national projects to mark Canada's 125th anniversary this year.

Dupras, a Montreal engineer and King, a Calgary businessperson, are co-chairs of "Canada 125," the non-profit corporation formed to plan the anniversary celebrations.

One of the major aims of Canada 125 is to generate enthusiasm for mass participation in community celebrations across Canada. A Canada-wide network of 35,000 volunteers is already in place to assist in planning and executing the projects.

Among the initial projects announced by Dupras and King are:

- The National Neighbourhood Party: This will be a one-day event on June 14. Canadians throughout the land will be invited to hold a neighbourhood party in order to get to know one another better. Canadian actor John Candy, star of many Hollywood comedies and co-owner of Canada's 1991 Grey Cup champion football team, the Toronto Argonauts, will act as national host.
- Discovery Box: a school-based program organized with the collaboration of teachers across the country. It will encourage school classes to exchange information about themselves and their communities.
- The Super Bike Rides: are a series of cycling events through which, in some instances, Canadians will raise funds for provincial charities and promote cycling as a family activity.
- The 125 Gold Song Contest: has been organized by the federal Ministry of communications. It is a national song competition open to all Canadian song-writers who wish to submit their compositions.
- The "Proud to be a Canadian" Tour: is organized by the Kinsmen and Kinette service clubs. Six hundred communities will organize ceremonies at schools, special noon hour events and other festivities. Children can sign specially designed flags to be presented at official ceremonies on Parliament Hill on Canada Day, July 1, 1992.
- The National Neighbourhood Party is sponsored in part by Canada Dry. Discovery Box is sponsored in part by the Canadian Bus Association and supported by Greyhound Lines of Canada Ltd. The Super Bike Rides are sponsored in part by Canadian Tire, ManuLife Financial and Tour de l'Île de Montreal Inc.
- Other projects will be announced in the weeks and months to come.

Christian labour union argues against scabs and closed-shops

Bill Fledderus
MISSISSAUGA, Ont. — The Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC) argues that closed-shop practices are a violation of employee rights. It also suggests that it would support the banning of "scab" hirings under certain conditions.

The CLAC made these points in a recent submission to Ontario Minister of Labour Bob Mackenzie. The submission was a response to the labour ministry's November discussion paper on reforming the Labour Relations Act.

Closed-shop policies in which union membership is a necessary condition of employment are contrary to the voluntary nature of trade unions, according to Ed Grootenboer, executive director of CLAC. The Christian union proposes that employees who object to joining a union at their place of work should be allowed to have their dues directed to charity.

CLAC would agree to a ban against the hiring of "scabs," replacement workers hired during strikes, but only in situations in which two conditions have been met: the union must have held a strike vote within two weeks prior to the strike and fully disclosed to the membership the issues remaining in dispute, and the union must also have offered to submit the dispute to binding arbitration.

"We hold no illusions about simplistic answers to the difficult questions people and organizations face in the workplace, but we need to break through the hostilities and adversarial relationships which too frequently characterize the relationship between labour and management," he says.

The CLAC is an independent union which has been certified since 1963 and currently represents over 11,000 members, many of whom are in the construction, health care and manufacturing sectors.

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REPORT ON SEXUAL ABUSE

In June 1992, the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church will act on a report that deals with the shocking results of a survey on abuse: namely, **Report 28**, authored by the "Committee to Study Physical, Emotional and Sexual Abuse." This report refers to Classis Niagara's preliminary study in 1989, which may be ordered from our office.

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NOTE: See review of this book on page 20 of this issue.

'Decently and in good order': The incorporating of churches

...Continued from p. 11

My experience leads me to believe that far too little attention has been given to these matters by most congregations. This, of course, does not generally stop them from carrying on the business of being a church. It does, however, create real problems and often costly delays when the church wishes to re-finance or buy or sell property — to say nothing of the turmoil created should the church split.

Often at a time when speedy results are desirable, a transaction becomes bogged down. The church property is registered in the hands of deceased trustees and cannot be sold or mortgaged until 20 years of inactivity and careless attitudes are cleared up by costly legal manoeuvring. Or the church, having been incorporated 10 years ago, has no by-laws, or its by-laws have never been approved by the directors and ratified by the members. Special meetings will have to be called, legal documents drafted and explained, and governmental agencies and administrators will have to be convinced or appeased.

It frequently happens that the church, although once incorporated, becomes dissolved ("uncreated" as it were) for failure of the corporation to file the necessary returns. Sometimes by-laws, once thought to exist, are lost; and no one knows what the corporation can legally do or how it should be done. Deeds of land and other legal documents often simply can't be located. The amount of time, work and costs involved in clearing up such problems may be alarming and could have been avoided.

and property rights of their church as they are about their own.

I think a local congregation which is part of the Christian Reformed Church should be incorporated but it should be done prudently and properly. With incomplete or inappropriate corporate documentation, or without being incorporated, a church will most likely end up sooner or later in difficulties involving property issues, financing, ownership of assets, charitable status or other matters.

Those who sign as directors of a corporation are well advised to make sure they have all the necessary authority by way of appropriate documentation to justify their actions. One expects, of course, that in the church the elements of goodwill and trust will play a substantial and forgiving role with respect to flaws, infractions or inconsistencies, but the fact remains that the business of the church should be conducted in an orderly and appropriate legal fashion.

Wietse Posthumus is a lawyer and a member of the First Christian Reformed Church, Toronto.



Young Adults: YOU TOLD US...

Bill Fledderus

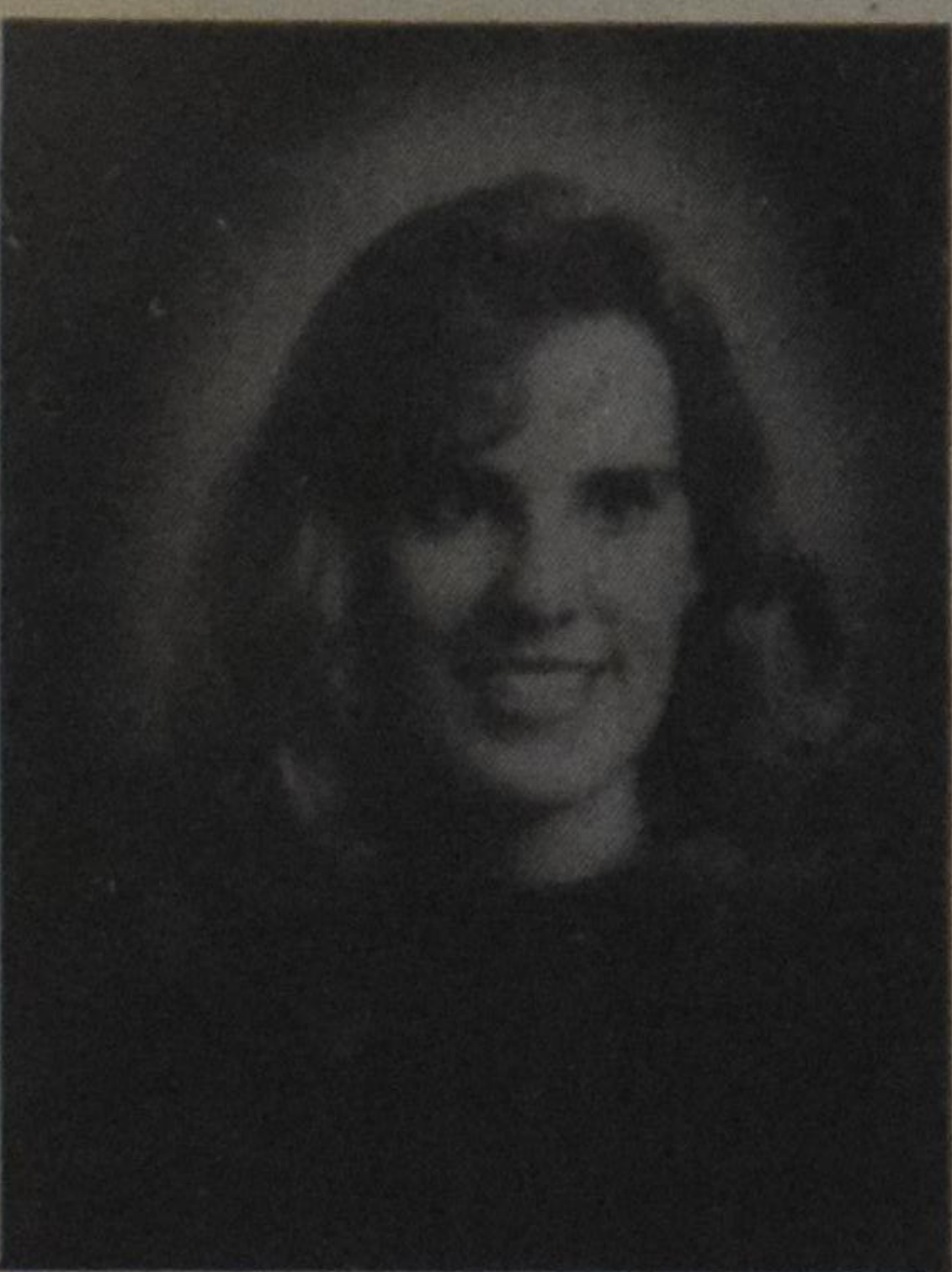
This is a second in a series addressing Christians in their 20s. Three weeks ago we asked their opinions about different styles of worship. Next time we'll ask about their opinions on newspapers.

If you're in your 20s and have some reaction to one of our questions, don't hesitate to write us! (Please send a picture — which we will return if you request it — along with your submission.)

If you have a question you would like to put to some of our young people, please send it in. So far, we have future columns dealing with the environment and personal devotions.

This week's question:

Many people assume that our readers are of Dutch descent. What percentage of your friends are of Dutch descent? Is that percentage significant?



Cindy Aalders, third-year chemistry student at The King's College:

Quite a large percentage of my friends are Dutch, although this has not always been the case. One of the reasons that percentage is now high is because of the friends I have made since I came to The King's College — I find that I share a common ancestry with most of them. Though most of us do not speak or understand the Dutch language (nor are we intimately familiar with Dutch culture), we are very conscious of our "Dutchness."

I admit I find it interesting when I discover similarities among Dutch families and their churches across Canada. However, Dutch immigrations of the past do not form foundations for any of my friendships — more often, Dutchness is merely a characteristic of those friendships.



Jill Roszell, Grade 10 student in Regina, Saskatchewan:

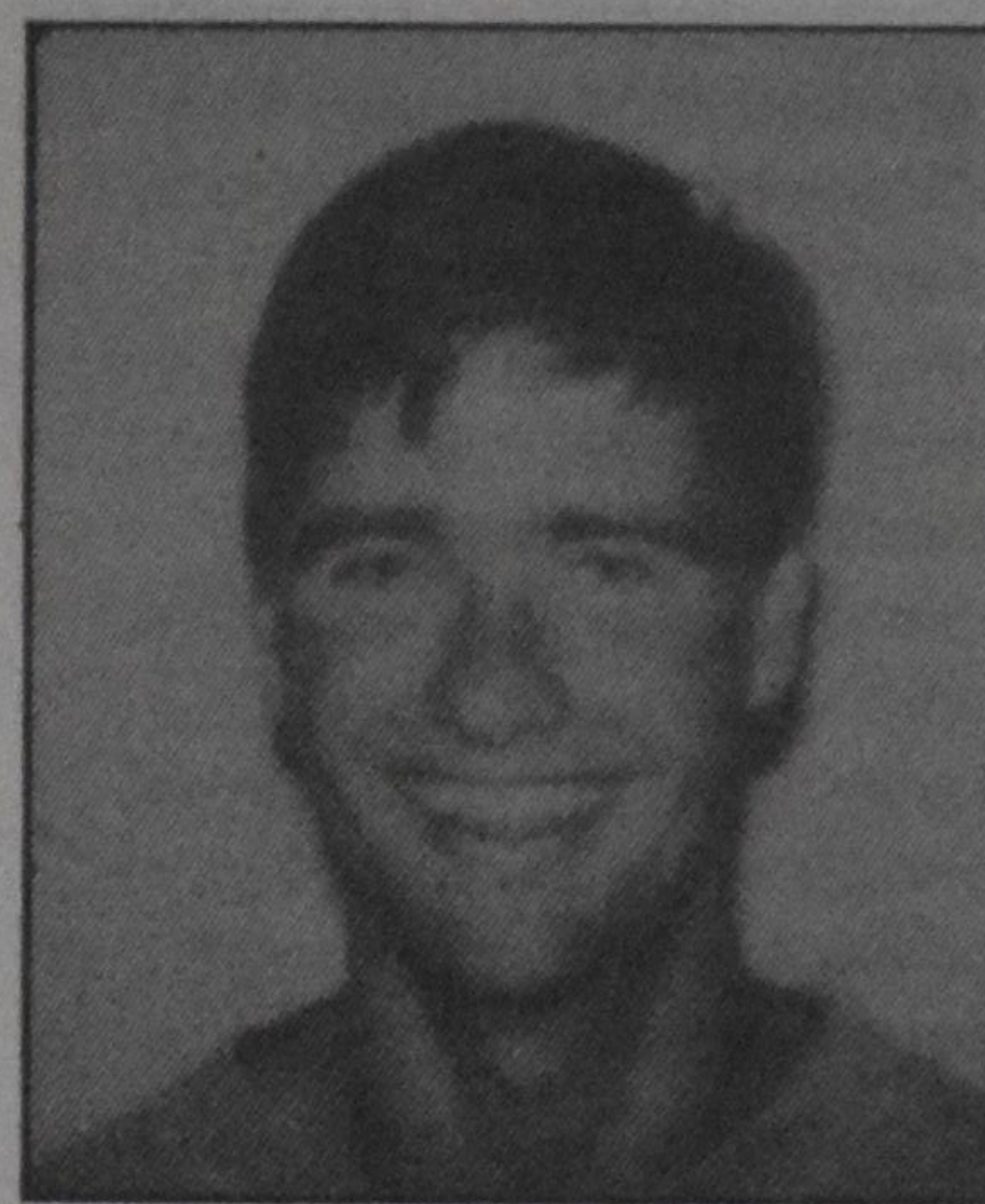
Including friends from school, church and other activities I am involved in, only about two per cent of my friends are of Dutch descent — that two per cent comes from

my youth group. The majority of my friends are descended from a wide variety of peoples, if they even recognize it as such.

I would like to meet more people that I have a common background with, but I am content with the friends I have. Ethnic background is not a major concern.

Curtis Halbesma, computer programmer/analyst in Winnipeg, Manitoba:

About 50 per cent of my friends are of Dutch descent. That number is of no real concern to me. I hold no special reserves for Dutch friends. Relationships are built on openness through Christ and he does not have ancestral separation lines.

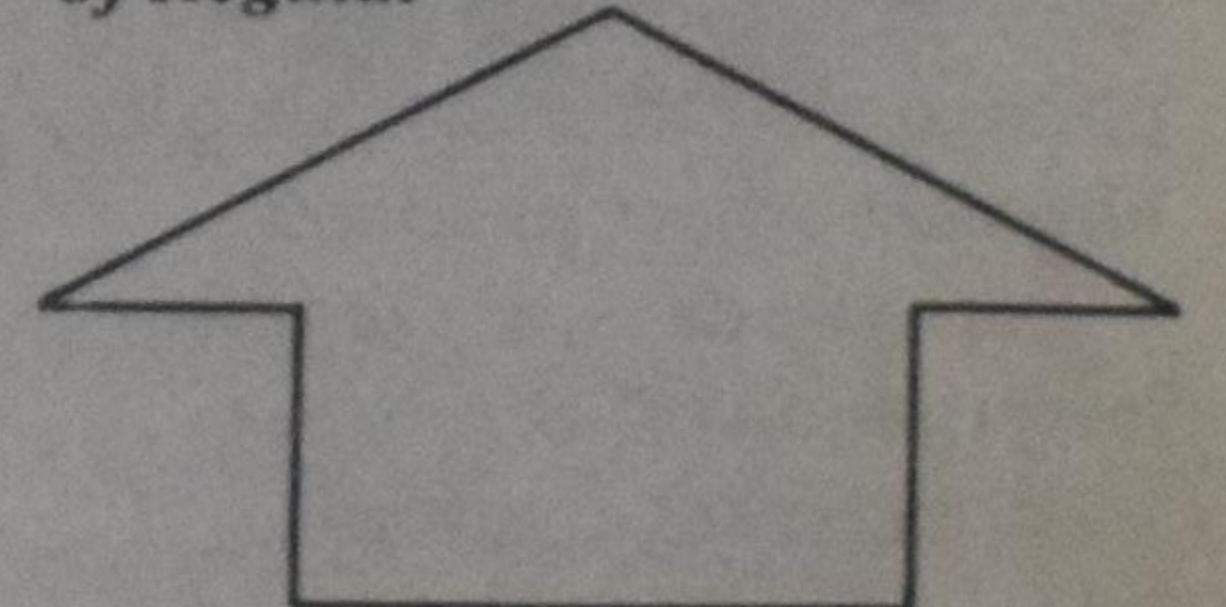


Pete VanderHeide, senior physical education student at Redeemer College in Ancaster, Ont.:

Not all of my friends are Dutch, but the majority are. Going to a school where over half of the population is Dutch,

and attending a church which is predominantly Dutch has a lot to do with it. However, Dutch friends are no different than any others. What is important is the fact that they are friends. Living in this somewhat sheltered environment has affected *who* my friends are but not *what* they are to me. Whether Dutch, Armenian, Irish or Italian they are an invaluable asset to a happy life.

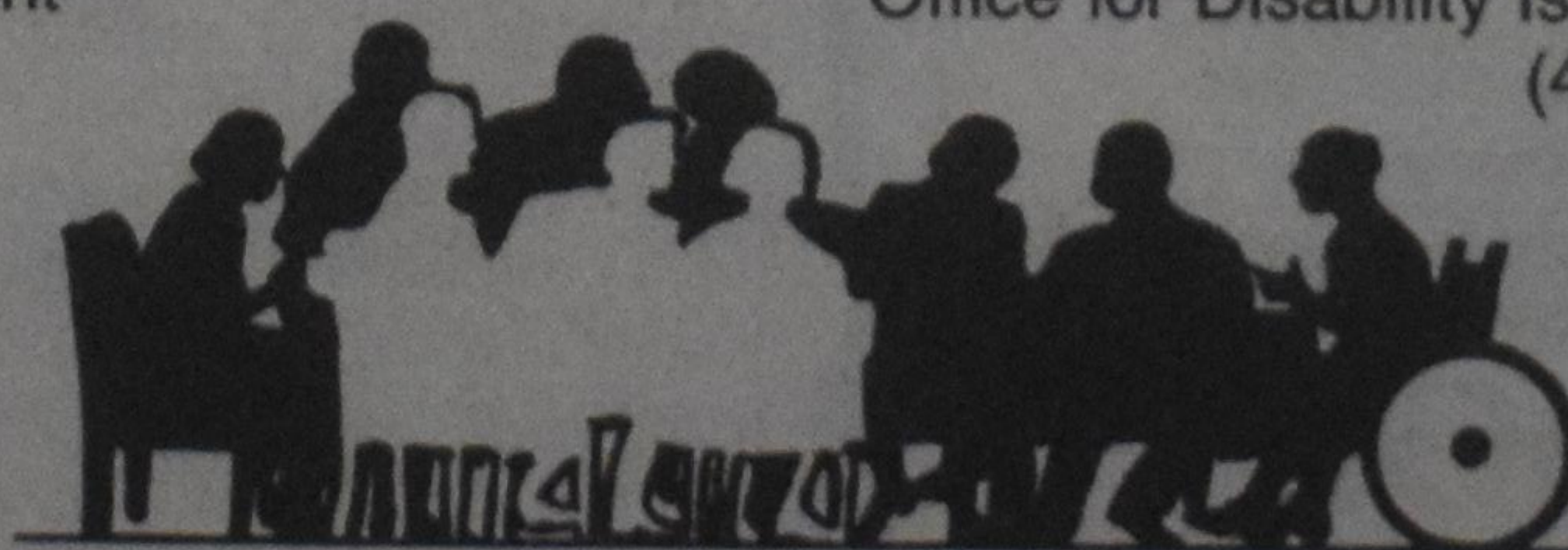
We do occasionally stray outside of the age group as we did this week with Jill Roszell of Regina.



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Opinion

A plea for informed, involved moderates

Angela Ferrante

The following article was originally a commentary for "The House," a CBC radio program. We print it here with permission. We thought that a dose of moderation would be welcome in public debates around many issues. We may not accept the basic premise of what constitutes "common sense" or a "liberal society," but there is something here called "levelheadedness" that should appeal to us all.

I have always considered myself a moderate person, a practical one: somehow the middle ground always seemed to suit me best. Back in the '60s when all my friends were marching, I was studying. I took up neither the left wing nor the right wing. Without planning to, I adopted a case-by-case approach to public issues. I take a long time to form an opinion on tough moral issues such as abortion and capital punishment. Even when I do make up my mind, I can still see the other guy's point of view. In that, I am a lot like most other Canadians.

But these days, as the noise level rises on issues ranging from day care to national unity, from free trade to deficits, I wonder where all the moderates are? Where are all those Canadians who, like me, just want a country that works, a country where people try to get along, raise their kids, do volunteer work, hold down a job and share the benefits with anybody not lucky enough to have one?

Lately, extremists and special interest groups pushing single issues seem to have

hijacked public debate. You know extremists when you hear them. They proudly say they won't compromise. They are quick to make up their minds and slow to change them. They begin their sentences with, "I may not know what I'm talking about, but this is what I think," or "I do know what I'm talking about, and this is what you should think."

The conspiracy theory

I have my personal list of annoying self-appointed social judges: environmental activists who knock spikes into trees that can take the arm off a sawmill worker; animal rights activists who throw dye at people wearing fur coats; demonstrators who defy injunctions and try to block women from abortion clinics; people who complain after all these years of French on their cereal boxes; separatists and others who say, with a perfectly straight face, that the country that has produced the fifth highest quality of life has been a dismal failure. Who hasn't been harangued about all those immigrants who have ruined

the country? Finally, anyone, anywhere, who blames everything on "them" — that invisible, unnameable, pervasive enemy behind every conspiracy theory.

Sociologists tell us that when the social consensus breaks down, the moderates flee the field and the extremists gain credibility. Perhaps that is what is happening to us. Perhaps we have stopped believing in the same things or wanting the same things, or maybe it's just easier to have a social consensus when the economy is growing and the only problem is which groups will get more. Maybe it's because we're in a period of making tough economic and political trade-offs.

One thing is certain, around us we hear ever more strident language: someone who may be merely negligent is called a racist; someone who supports a woman's right to choose on abortion is called a murderer; someone who honestly believes that free trade is actually good for the country is called a traitor. I'm not saying there aren't murderers, traitors and racists in this country, but if you think everybody is the enemy, we may very well miss him when he comes — the enemy of intolerance, fear, complacency and greed. The problem is that angry words lead to even more angry words. A slight, intended or not, leads to another. When anger takes over, reason and moderation depart.

Extremists won't help us

But it is not extremists who will help to raise our kids, get us a job or make our society work. It may not even be the special interest groups, as useful as they can be, because many interest groups have hardened their positions and so lost their ability to broker deals amongst conflicting views. In our pluralistic, liberal society, we will need informed, involved moderates — people with open minds who haven't forgotten how to make a deal. So this is a plea for them to come forward.

It's easy to recognize the moderate: he or she is the one cowering in the corner of any conversation, looking shell-shocked. Let's not let the extremists herd us into opposing camps, bellowing at each other from a great distance. Let's make decisions about our country the way we've always tried to do — according to what is fair, decent, and above all, what makes sense.

Angela Ferrante is vice-president of the C.D. Howe Institute in Toronto.

Bob Rae's error

Bert Hielema

I must confess that in September 1990, for the first time in my life, I voted socialist — in an advance poll. We, my wife and I, were in a Halifax motel room when I found out that I had not been the only one who had wanted to curtail the arrogance of then Ontario Premier David Peterson.

A 10-billion dollar deficit budget was supposed to kick-start the economy, but the kick proved to be more like a self-inflicted knock-out. Now Boris Yeltsin has a partner in gloom and doom — current Ontario premier Bob Rae — although Yeltsin's approach has been different and, I think, more honest.

Just like Bob did last week in talking about Ontario's economic problems, Boris has also used TV as the medium to bring the bad news. In a recent interview, Yeltsin warned the Russian people of months of blood, sweat, toil and tears to come. But he did something Bob Rae did not do: he promised to take full responsibility if matters would not improve, and to resign if things went wrong.

No Russian leader — or any Western leader for that matter — has ever spoken to his people like that, and this honesty may just see him through. We all know that Boris is playing the sort of roulette for which Russians are justifiably famous, with perhaps as many as five out of the six chambers loaded.

Semblance of honesty

Bob's booboo was that his televised speech gave only a semblance of honesty. He is not playing it straight with the people of Ontario. In that regard he is the same as George Bush, who just came back from the Far East — a trip on which Murphy's law had been working overtime. Both Rae and Bush are playing peekaboo with reality. Their optimistic utterances about jobs, jobs, jobs sound phoney because they know them to be phoney, and they leave themselves no way out if the economy does not improve.

But Rae is no fool. He's an Oxford-trained economist, and of all the political leaders in Canada (including John Crosby), the most intelligent. So what's the real situation?

The torch of world trade that centuries ago burned above the Mediterranean and which until lately shone above the Atlantic shores (Toronto via the St. Lawrence Seaway is on the Atlantic) has now passed to the Pacific. This places Harcourt in the right court, but spells problems for Ontario. The axis of the new world now spins around the Tokyo-Taiwan-Singapore line, which means that the Toronto-Windsor-Detroit-New York corridor is indeed in a "free fall," as Bush so naively phrased it in New Hampshire and demonstrated in Tokyo.

New structures are emerging

What Rae forgot to mention (because his basic support depends on it) is that one in five jobs in Ontario are directly or indirectly connected to the automotive industry, and industry which is in a structural decline. Via Rail use is up six per cent. Car sales are down 12 per cent or more. GM in 1993 will have trimmed down to 50 per cent of the workforce it employed in 1985. This is the trend in the car industry and this *should be* the trend if we want to be serious about the environment.

Canada's largest exporter is the paper industry. We now recycle a good portion of this at the cost of jobs, jobs, jobs. However, trees are our lungs, and we must save them. Robert Rae's error is that he knows this but did not tell the province. Honesty pays, also in political good will.

No wonder politicians, especially ruling ones, are in low esteem nowadays. With his TV appearance Rae has not regained any of his credibility. On the contrary.

What then should he have done? He should have been truly candid and made official what most people already openly acknowledge: we are in for a structural change. No longer is the male-muscle power of the common labourer supreme — basically the backbone of the NDP. Brains are needed and skills. Thus no make-work projects, but more education and re-schooling. And yes, a stimulation of different schools of thought with the grants following the student, whether that is in the elementary, secondary or higher level or in technical and academic institutions.

Our public sector, like GM and IBM, needs a drastic overhaul. A nation that spends 12 per cent of its resources on sick-care is sick indeed. Our collective mind is sick and that is why the nation, with its economy, is sick.

Christians, arise and shout from the rooftops that Jesus Christ is the Lord of Creation. The fields have never been more ripe for harvest.

Bert Hielema is a real estate appraiser living in Tweed, Ont.

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There are primates, and then there are primates...

Marian Van Til

TORONTO — According to the Oxford English Dictionary a *primate* is either "an archbishop" or "a member of the highest order of mammals including man and apes, etc." And therein lies the rub — or the slip on the banana peel.

Anglican Archbishop Michael Peers of Toronto received a questionnaire in December from the University of Wisconsin's Wisconsin Regional Primate Research Center. The questionnaire was addressed to the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund and solicited "co-operation in the preparation of an 'International Directory of Primatology,'" reports the February 1992 *Anglican Journal*. The questionnaire wanted descriptions of "primate oriented projects and programs" and "primate

species and numbers supported (if applicable)."

The Primate Research Center described itself as collecting data at the "molecular, cellular, systemic, whole animal and environmental levels." It assured the Primate's office that it "is self-sufficient in breeding colonies of primates and does not import from the wild."

Primate Peers' office showed a sense of humour in its reply. Archbishop Peers' principal secretary, Rev. Michael Ingham, told the research centre that "the primates in your study are perhaps of a different species" than those associated with the church.

"While it is true that our primate occasionally enjoys bananas, I have never seen him walk with his knuckles on the

ground or scratch himself publicly under his armpits," Ingham explained. "Like you, we do not import our primates from the wild. They are elected from among the bishops of our church. This is occasionally a cause of similar, though arcane, comment."

Endangered species

Ingham told the primate researchers that "there are a mere 28 Anglican primates in the whole world," all of them male, but that so far they "have had no problems of reproduction." Ingham then suggested to the research centre that their "extremely efficient database" might need "a little refining."

John Hearn, director of the Primate Research Center, acknowledged the centre's mistake equally good-humouredly. "We are

concerned that the Anglican primate group has only 28 members worldwide," he wrote back. "This places the species in the red date book of IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature) as highly endangered."

Hearn promised to adjust the centre's database "so that you receive no further enquiries concerning the reproductive status, sex ratio, age structure or composition of your group." He admitted, "In our zeal to develop a comprehensive directory, we

have strayed on this occasion from the arboreal to the spiritual."

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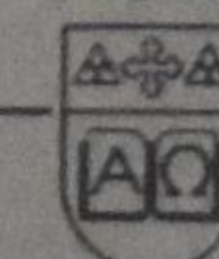
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small talk

Alice Los

Night life

Motels, hotels and country inns serve a useful purpose. Without these institutions long-distance travel would hardly be possible. For me they have sometimes also served to show me how other people live. If I should look out of the window in the hollow of the night at home I would not see more than a moonlit yard, with perhaps a few bunnies scurrying about. And if a car should pass on the road at all I would wonder where on earth it was going at three in the morning. I'd probably conclude it was a young man taking his wife to the hospital to have a baby. Nothing sinister, anyway.

But in a motel, nights can be very restless. It's not unusual, I find, for people in the room directly over mine to take a shower long after everyone else has called it a day. I've also tried to sleep while in the room next door at least six grade-schoolers were having a ball watching late movies, bumping furniture about and talking with high-pitched voices. They were the children of the owner, it appeared, enjoying a pyjama party with their friends. Annoying (and also bad for business!) as it was, it did not affect me half as much as the marital spat that once erupted over my head and spilled out into the hallway of the motel's second floor where it ran its ugly course until it faded away after much screaming and slamming of doors.

On another occasion when my husband and I had checked into what looked like a decent place somewhere south of the border, with my parents in the room next to us, we were awakened by a ruckus at 2 a.m. We saw a few police cars out on the parking lot while several young men and women, blacks and whites, were milling about. Some were being questioned and one young black man was detained in the back seat of one of the police cars. He seemed very upset, and especially my father was struck by the fact that, repeatedly,

he would fold his hands and lift his head in prayer.

After a while things seemed to have been resolved and everyone was allowed to go, leaving the four of us to cope with emotions evoked by a slice of life with which we were unfamiliar.

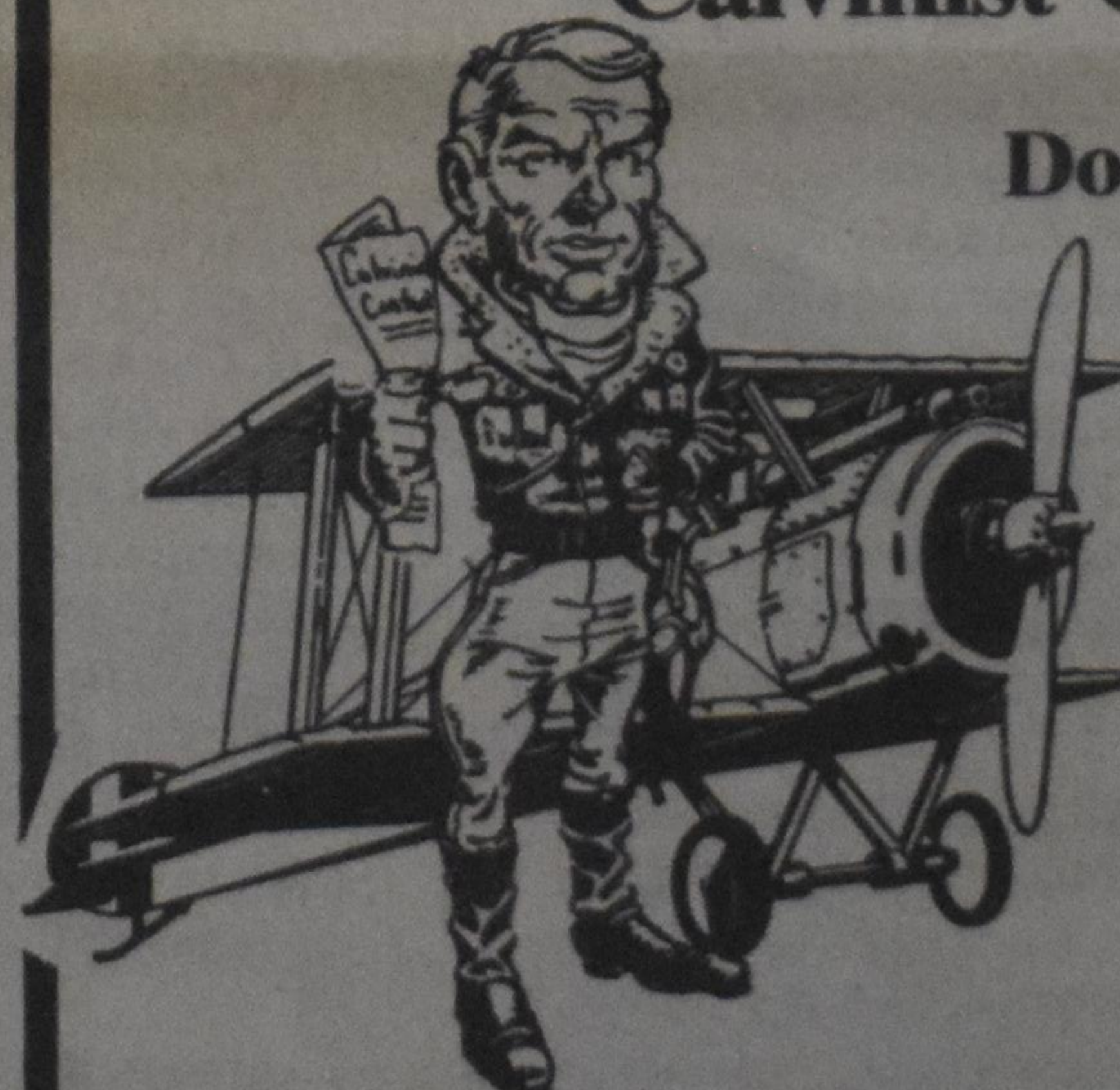
At the risk of giving the impression that I often seem to find myself at the wrong place I now also remember the evening in a room of a classy hotel where I was a guest at a conference. There was a door leading into the next room and I checked to see if it was locked. Then I heard a man on the phone. He was pleading (in vain) with a woman to come and spend the night with him. I did not know whether to be sad or furious. Was he desperately lonely? Was he just plain awful? A while later I heard him call his son, finding out how the boy was doing in school. I wished he would close the connecting door on his side and so exclude me from his life. He was a total stranger and I could not very well confront him or offer moral support. Instead I was glad to escape with my husband to the final meeting of that day.

As I said, nights around our place are peaceful. But sometimes when I listen to the regenerative silence I remember those who don't seem to find much rest, ever. I know they are found in the quiet countryside as well as in the urban areas where sounds never cease. Perhaps their lives are disconnected from the Source of peace and quiet. Perhaps they are restless by nature or hanker after the excitement of taking risks. Whatever the case, I cannot allow myself to forget they are out there, and silently I remember them to God.

Alice Los lives in Inkerman, Ont.

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Advice



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Dear P&M:
Many people these days prepare for their funeral in advance. They buy plots; they choose tombstones. I have always wondered how Christians should view cremation. Is it necessary to be buried, or is cremation an alternative for Christians? I would really appreciate your view on this matter.

Dear Ashes to Ashes:
When Abraham negotiated with God to spare Sodom, Lot's home town, he described himself as "nothing but dust and ashes." That realization is reinforced at every funeral where the pastor intones the words: "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust." Clearly it makes absolutely no difference whether one's remains are slowly reduced to dust or quickly reduced to ashes.

A scriptural study of this subject reveals some interesting information. In Bible times the usual method of dealing with the body was burial in a sepulchre. In some cases, the burial was followed by a funeral fire honouring the deceased (Jer. 34: 5). King Asa, for example, was buried in a tomb and "laid on a bier covered with spices and blended perfumes, and they made a huge fire in his honour" (II Chron. 16: 14, cf. 21: 19). The funeral fire mentioned here had nothing to do with cremation. We only note it as an example of how fire was associated with death and burial in ancient Israel.

In other cases cremation was practised, but reserved primarily for those who seriously violated God's laws. Burning by fire was to be applied as punishment to a man and his mother-in-law if they married. The same sentence held for a priest's daughter if she defiled herself by becoming a prostitute. The Bible provides us one memorable instance of this kind of punishment in the story of Achan (Joshua 7). As you recall, he took and hid some plunder from Jericho. Consequently Israel lost the battle against Ai. Israel stoned Achan, his sons and daughters, even his cattle, donkeys and sheep. When they were dead they were burned, along with the rest of Achan's possessions and the items that he had kept as plunder. You can see why cremation, from its earliest beginnings, had negative connotations. It was associated with purging and purifying the wicked from among the righteous. Later, zealous Christians in the Middle Ages would take their cue from these Old Testament examples and burn heretics at the stake.

On the other hand, the Bible also gives an example of cremation with positive connotations. At the end of I Samuel we read that the bodies of Saul and his sons were burned by the people of Jabesh Gilead. This prevented the Philistines from desecrating and abusing the remains.

Now to the present. The Board of Funeral Services of Ontario has put out a helpful brochure giving consumer information about funerals. It includes the following answers to questions most frequently asked about

cremation:

Q. What is cremation?
A. Cremation is a process by which flames reduce the body to a white residue, actually pulverized bone, weighing 3-5 pounds. The public ordinarily does not witness the cremation process by which the human body is reduced to cremated remains.

Q. Is a casket required by law when a dead body is to be cremated?
A. No; however, crematories have a rule which requires that a body be enclosed in a container of combustible material and that the body be cremated in the casket or container in which it is received at the crematory.

Q. What percentage of people choose cremation?
A. In Ontario, statistics indicate that in 11 per cent of deaths occurring, cremation is selected rather than earth burial.

Q. Are we running out of cemetery space?
A. No, there is at present enough cemetery space available, or in the process of being made available, to bury those expected to die within the next 100 years.

Q. Can a dead human body be cremated immediately following death?
A. No, Ontario law prohibits cremating any dead human body prior to the expiration of 48 hours after death.

Q. What is done with the cremated remains?
A. Cremated remains are interred in a cemetery, placed in a niche in a columbarium, scattered on one's private property or kept by the family in their home.

Ultimately it makes no difference to the Lord whether one of his children dies physically intact, drowns at sea and is never found, or is burned beyond recognition. Why then should it matter to the Lord whether someone is buried or cremated? All that matters is our resurrection faith, based on Christ's resurrection, which reassures us that the body which is sown will be raised imperishable, in glory, in power, as a spiritual body which bears the likeness of the man from heaven (I Cor. 15: 42-44, 49).

Cremation is an option for any Christian who is psychologically comfortable with this decision. In smaller countries where space-saving must be a consideration, such as the Netherlands, cremation is selected by 50 per cent of the population. Increased familiarity with cremation sharply decreases the discomfort people feel with this subject.

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Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of: Sam Da Silva, Ineke Brouwer-Parlevliet, Tom Zeyl, Marian Van Til and Bert Witvoet.

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<div>GST inclusive</div> <div>Births.....\$35.00</div> <div>Marriages & Engagements. \$40.00</div> <div>Anniversaries.....\$45.00</div> <div>2-column anniversaries....\$90.00</div> <div>Obituaries.....\$45.00</div> <div>Notes of thanks.....\$35.00</div> <div>Birthdays.....\$35.00</div> <div>All other one-column classified advertisements: \$13.50 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is \$25.00. Letter under file number, \$35.00 extra. Photos: \$25.00 additional charge. (Free when published with anniversary announcement celebrating 50 years or more.)</div> <div>Note: All rates shown above are GST inclusive.</div> <div>ATTENTION!</div> <div>a) Calvinist Contact reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format, unless you instruct us otherwise.</div> <div>b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is not acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion.</div> <div>c) Photographs sent by fax are not acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original.</div> <div>d) Calvinist Contact will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.</div> <div>e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to six column inches. Calvinist Contact reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of \$13.50 per column inch (GST inclusive).</div> <div>NEWLYWEDS</div> <div>Non-subscribing newlyweds whose wedding announcement with their future address appears in Calvinist Contact will receive a letter offering a first-year subscription for only \$20.00 (GST inclusive)! To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request and pay for the wedding announcement to enclose \$20.00 and the couple's future address.</div> <div>Calvinist Contact Publishing Ltd.</div> <div>4-261 Martindale Rd.</div> <div>St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1</div> <div>Phone: (416) 682-8311</div> <div>Fax: (416) 682-8313</div>	<div>SCHUT:</div> <div>With great joy and thankfulness to God, we, Harry and Janet Schut, announce the birth of our first child, a daughter,</div> <div>TRACEY JANETTE</div> <div>born on Jan. 16, 1992, weighing 8 lbs., 4 1/2 oz.</div> <div>First grandchild for Bill and Fran Eekhof of Tavistock, Ont., and fourth grandchild for John and Alice Schut of Woodstock, Ont.</div> <div>A great-grandchild for Huibert and Dickey DeGroot, Tillsonburg, Ont.; Fenna Schut, Brampton, Ont.; and Pat Dykstra, Smithville, Ont.</div> <div>"Praise God from whom all blessings flow."</div> <div>VISSCHER:</div> <div>Albert and Theresa thank God for the safe arrival of a healthy baby daughter,</div> <div>KATHLEEN JULIANNE</div> <div>on Dec. 21, 1991, weighing 8 lbs., 14 oz.</div> <div>She is a little sister for Angela and Melanie and the seventh grandchild for Mrs. A. Visscher of Staffa.</div> <div>Home address: R.R. #2, Staffa, ON NOK 1Y0</div>
Thanks	Birthday
<div>HARTMAN:</div> <div>To all who sent cards, best wishes and phonecalls, a big thank you. And above all we thank the Lord, for his goodness to keep us this far.</div> <div>Mr. and Mrs. J. Hartman,</div> <div>1415 Upper Wellington St.,</div> <div>Hamilton, Ont.</div> <div>KAMPHUIS:</div> <div>John and Willemina Kamphuis wish to thank the children, the relatives, the residents, staff and Board of Shalom Manor, the members of the Mountainview C.R.C. congregation and all other friends, who sent cards, flowers, donations for Shalom and best wishes.</div> <div>We thank the Lord for all of you and for the many blessings we received in 40 years of marriage.</div>	<div>VANDEN AKKER:</div> <div>It is with praise and thanksgiving to our God that we celebrate the 80th birthday of</div> <div>JOHANNA VANDEN AKKER</div> <div>(nee Marcus)</div> <div>May the Lord continue to bless you with health and happiness.</div> <div>From your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren:</div> <div>Riet & Tom Valstar</div> <div>Henny & John Broekema</div> <div>Bert & Mieka Vanden Akker</div> <div>Joanna & George Langbroek</div> <div>Leo Vanden Akker</div> <div>Open house on Thursday, Feb. 13, 1992, from 7:30 to 10:00 p.m. at Tabitha Homes, 99A Scott St., St. Catharines, Ont.</div> <div>Home address: Apt. #216 Tabitha Homes, 99A Scott St., St. Catharines, ON L2N 1G8</div>
Anniversaries	
<div>Ommen</div> <div>Edmonton</div> <div>1952</div> <div>1992</div> <div>"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!" (Phil. 4: 4.)</div> <div>We rejoice with our parents and grandparents,</div> <div>JOHN and ROELI MOES</div> <div>(nee Dunnwind)</div> <div>on the occasion of their 40th wedding anniversary on Feb. 20, 1992.</div> <div>Everett & Annette</div> <div>Joanne, Carol, Julie, Matthew, Catherine</div> <div>Henrietta</div> <div>Al & Heather</div> <div>Diana</div> <div>Open house will be held Saturday, Feb. 22, 1992, from 8-10 p.m. in the East Edmonton Chr. School 11515-36 St.</div> <div>Home address: 11212-34 St., Edmonton, AB T5W 1Y9</div>	

ATTENTION: ALL SCHOOLS

When sending us copy for teacher ads, by mail or fax, please indicate 1) ad size and 2) how many weeks the ad should run! Note: If you do not indicate the number of ad repeats, we will insert the ad on a weekly basis until further notice.

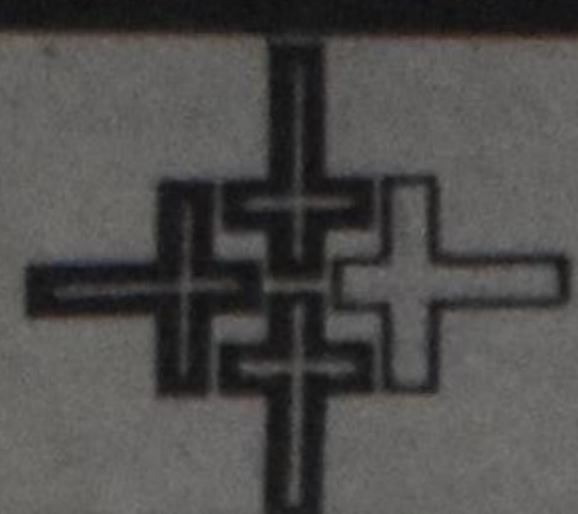
Calvinist Contact
Advertising Manager

Classified

Obituaries	Employment wanted	Teachers	Teachers	Teachers
<p><i>There is an open gate at the end of the road Through which each of us must go alone And there, in a light we cannot see, Our Father, claims His own... Beyond the gate your loved one Finds happiness and rest, And there is comfort in the thought That a loving God knows best.</i></p> <p>On Jan. 4, 1992, the Lord took our beloved husband, father, and grandfather</p> <p>CASEY AASMAN</p> <p>home to be with him. Born on March 10, 1927, in Holland, he immigrated to Alberta and married Ina Van Staalduin in 1953, and they were blessed with 38 years of marriage. He will be greatly missed by his wife Ina. Arthur & Gerry Aasman Helena & Stan Mastel Hettie & John Hoof Brian & Jackie Aasman Casey & Donna Aasman and ten grandchildren. The funeral services were held at First Chr. Ref. Church, Medicine Hat, Alta., on Jan. 7, 1992, with Pastor Harry Bierman officiating.</p> <p>GRAHAM OLIVER SMITH (age 37)</p> <p>"For my thoughts are not your thoughts neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord" (Is. 55:8). God's way was not our deepest desire and prayer on the morning of Nov. 4, 1991, when he took Graham to be with him. Beloved husband of Jennie (nee Kingma), father to Lisa and Eddie. We thank all who so faithfully prayed for us during Graham's illness, and all that still do remember us now, as we are adjusting to our life without Graham.</p>	<p>I am a 19 year old agricultural graduate from Holland. I would like to work on a dairy farm with registered Holsteins, for a one year period. Can start early Spring. For more information contact me at: Albert Garritsen, Buisweerdweg 2, 7245 SW Lochem, Gld., the Netherlands, Tel. 011-31-5731-1290 or call my uncle at: (519) 482-5852.</p> <p>Teachers</p> <p>BOWMANVILLE, Ont.: Durham Chr. High School invites applicants for the position of physical education/English for the 1992/93 school year. Please send applications to: Ren Siebenga Durham Chr. High School R.R.#1, Bowmanville, ON L1C 3K2</p> <p>HAMILTON, Ont.: Calvin Chr. School invites candidates to apply for teaching positions, probably at the junior and/or intermediate grade levels. CCS has served the Hamilton area since 1952 and we anticipate a student enrolment of about 360 students for the next academic year. We are blessed with an excellent supporting community and are able to offer a varied program with special education, library and resource specialist support. If you would like to consider joining a dynamic team of committed teachers who provide high quality Christian education, please forward your resume to the Principal: Mr. A. Ben Harsevoort, Calvin Christian School 547 West Fifth St. Hamilton, ON L9C 3P7 Phone: (416) 388-2645 Fax: (416) 388-2769</p> <p>LACOMBE, Alta.: Central Alberta Chr. High School. God continues to bless this high school with significant growth. We anticipate hiring additional staff in the area of English/social, and/or French for the 1992/93 school year. Our community is excited with the privilege of providing Christian education to Central Alberta area students, and challenges new and experienced teachers to consider the call to join them. Address inquiries/resumes to: Jack Vanden Pol, Principal Box A 2400 Lacombe, AB T0C 1S0 Phone: (403) 782-4535</p> <p>LANGLEY, B.C.: Langley Chr. School, a growing interdenominational K-7 school, located in the Fraser Valley, invites applications for teaching positions for the 1992/93 school year. Applicants need to meet B.C. teacher certification requirements. Address all applications and inquiries to: Leo Smit, Principal Langley Chr. School 21789 - 50th Avenue Langley, BC V3A 3T2</p> <p>LEDUC, Alta.: Covenant Chr. School has two potential openings for 1992/93: an upper elementary and a junior high position. Apply soon to this innovative and community-minded school. Send resumes to: Gayle Monsma, Covenant Chr. School, Box 3827, Leduc, AB T9E 6M7 Phone: (403) 986-8353</p>	<p>LONDON, Ont.: London District Chr. Secondary School invites applications for a Science/Math position, a possible English position and possibly other positions for the 1992/93 school year. Please send your letter of application, accompanied by a statement of faith, resume and references to: Mr. H. Kooy, Principal c/o LDCSS, 24 Braesyde Ave. London, ON N5W 1V3</p> <p>MAPLE RIDGE, B.C.: Haney - Pitt Meadows Chr. School is now accepting applications for primary and intermediate teaching positions. A background in music is desirable as well as computer literacy. Please send resumes to: T. Vroon, Principal Haney - Pitt Meadows Chr. School 121240-203rd. St., Maple Ridge, BC V2X 4V5 Canada Tel.: (604) 465-4442</p> <p>NANAIMO, B.C.: Nanaimo Chr. School is seeking applicants for a junior high teaching position to begin in September 1992. Join a growing interdenominational school community on beautiful Vancouver Island. Send resume to: Mr. Ben Hendricks, Principal c/o Nanaimo Chr. School 198 Holland Rd. Nanaimo, BC V9R 5K3</p> <p>NEWMARKET, Ont.: Holland Marsh District Chr. School thanks the Lord for the need of a second Grade 2 teacher for 1992/93. If you are interested in this position please send your application to the principal: Mrs. C. Bootsma, HMDCS, R.R. #2, Newmarket, ON L3Y 4V9 For further information call: (416) 775-3701</p> <p>PETERBOROUGH, Ont.: Rhema Chr. School, an interdenominational elementary school of 170 students, is seeking applications for teaching positions in the middle elementary grades. These positions, available as a result of growth and staffing changes, are available for the 92/93 school year. If you are interested in joining our dynamic Christian staff, please contact Ray Hendriks at (705) 743-1400 (school) or 748-5004 (home) or send resume to 3195 Parkhill Rd. E., Peterborough, ON K9L 1B8</p> <p>PORT PERRY, Ont. : Scugog Christian School, an interdenominational school in Port Perry, Ont., invites applications for a Teacher and a Teaching Principal for the 1992/93 school year. Openings are in the primary and intermediate divisions. Please address all applications and inquiries to: Mrs. Peggy Michel 14080 Old Scugog Rd. Blackstock ON L0B 1B0 Tel. (416) 986-5262</p> <p>RED DEER, Alta.: Red Deer Chr. School, because of expected enrolment increases, will need an additional teacher at the junior high level for the 1992-93 school year. We also have possible openings at the elementary level. Experienced and new teachers are welcome to apply. Applications and inquiries should be directed to: Red Deer Chr. School, 14 McVicar St., Red Deer, AB T4N 0M1 Att. Mr. R. Duggan Phone: (403) 346-5795</p>	<p>PORT PERRY, Ont.: Scugog Chr. School invites applications for a Grade 4/5/6 combination position, due to maternity leave, for the period beginning March 1, 1992, to the end of the school year. Address all applications and inquiries to: Mrs. Peggy Michel, 14080 Old Scugog Rd., Blackstock, ON L0B 1B0, Phone: (416) 986-5262</p> <p>SMITHVILLE, Ont.: Smithville District Chr. High School, has a possible vacancy for a French teacher for the 92-93 school year. Please send all applications and direct all inquiries to: Smithville District Christian High School 6488 Smithville Road, Smithville, ON L0R 2A0 Telephone: (416) 957-3255 Fax: (416) 957-3431 Attention: Marc Strooboscher, Principal</p> <p>SURREY, B.C.: Fraser Valley Chr. High School is an interdenominational school in the Reformed tradition serving families and students in the lower Fraser Valley. Due to changing staff and increasing enrollment, we are looking for teachers with a combination of teaching areas in French, physical science, physical education. We are also in need of an intermediate humanities teacher with elementary experience or training. Applicants should send resume to the Principal: Al Boerema, Fraser Valley Chr. High School 15353-92 Ave., Surrey, BC V3R 1C3 Phone: (604) 581-1033</p> <p>Teachers Ads continued...</p>	<p>VANCOUVER, B.C.: Vancouver Christian School, a denominationally diverse community, currently offering Kindergarten through Grade 8, is planning to expand their junior high program and will require a Grade 9 teacher for the 1992/93 school year. Persons with a strong Math/Sciences background in education with interest in teaching P.E., Art or Computer, are invited to apply. Please direct enquiries to: Ellen Visser Junior High Program Co-ordinator Vancouver Christian School 3496 Mons Dr. Vancouver BC V5M 3E6</p> <p>We will also require a full-time Kindergarten teacher beginning in mid-March, 1992 and a full-time Grade 4 teacher beginning in late March, 1992. Please direct enquiries regarding these positions to Ron Donkersloot, Principal, at the address above.</p> <p>WOODSTOCK, Ont.: John Knox Chr. School. We are inviting letters of application and resumes for a possible opening in the intermediate division for the 1992/93 school year. Experience and strength in Science and/or French would be an asset. Please contact: Henry Tuininga, Principal 800 Juliana Dr., P.O. Box 243, Woodstock, ON N4S 7W8 Tel. (519) 539-1492</p> <p>WYOMING, Ont.: John Knox Chr. School has an opening for a full-time teacher for the 1992-93 school year. This position requires the teaching of Grade 2 (16 pupils) in the morning and remedial in the afternoon. This may also be two half-time positions. Interested individuals should send their resumes to: William Hordyk Principal, Box 81, Wyoming, ON N0N 1T0</p>
<p>Personal</p> <p>Single woman, age 31, wishes to meet Christian gentleman, age 26-40. Reply to Box # 1313, Thunder Bay South, ON P7C 5W2</p>				
<p>For Sale</p> <p>SPECIAL Home for sale, just 20 miles north of Toronto (close to hwy. 400) on a 1-acre lot. Fruit trees, a garden, solarium and a lovely country view. This home has five bedrooms (two in basement) and two bathrooms. Must be visually experienced, priced at about \$220,000. Call (416) 792-3446 for an appointment.</p> <p>House for sale Two-storey semi on quiet court in Brampton, Ont. Four bedrooms, large family room on main floor, new kitchen and diningroom. Good location, move-in condition. Phone: (416) 791-1672 (evenings) (416) 741-2273 (days) (416) 774-3721 (weekends)</p>				
<p>The Bible and Islam by Rev. Bassam Madany \$4.95 Canada / \$3.95 U.S. How to relate the gospel relevantly to the Muslim heart and mind. Write: The Back to God Hour P.O. Box 5070 Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8</p> <p>House for sale, close to Chr. schools and churches. Well-planned, three-bedroom split level on quiet cul-de-sac. Finished rec. room and bedrooms in basement. Needs some work. Located in St. Catharines, Ont. Please call (416) 877-1716.</p>				
			<div><div></div><div>Join a dynamic, rapidly expanding, interdenominational Christian School System of nearly 1,000 students K-12 that operates from three separate campuses. Abbotsford Christian School invites applications from teachers certifiable in B.C. for the following <i>new</i> positions for September 1992. CLAYBURN HILLS CAMPUS (K-7) and HERITAGE CAMPUS (K-7). Each campus approx. 400 students. <i>Primary - 2, 3</i> <i>Intermediate - 6</i> <i>Learning Assistance</i> SECONDARY CAMPUS (8-12) Approximately 275 students. Two positions in combination of: <i>Math</i> <i>Junior High Science</i> <i>Humanities</i> Send applications, resume and references to: Henry Contant, Principal Lloyd Den Boer, Principal Abbotsford Christian School Clayburn Hills Campus Box 280 Abbotsford, BC V2S 4N8 (604) 850-2594 Fax: 859-9995</div><div>Dwight Moodie, Principal Abbotsford Christian School Secondary Campus Box 157 Abbotsford, BC V2S 4N8 (604) 850-5342 Fax: 859-2240</div></div>	

Classified

Teachers



Edmonton Christian Schools

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Teachers:

Applications are invited from interested individuals for teaching positions with the Edmonton Christian Schools. The Edmonton Christian School system is a progressive school system operating three elementary junior high schools and one senior high school. Applications are being accepted for all positions. The Edmonton Christian Schools provide a good salary and benefit package with ample opportunity for professional development, growth and advancement. Openings are anticipated in elementary, junior high and high school.

Administrators:

Educators interested in an administrative position are invited to apply for the principalship of North Edmonton Christian School. Closing date for this position is Feb. 28, 1992.

Send applications for teaching and administrative positions to:

Ms. Tena Siebenga
East Edmonton Christian School
11515-36 Street
Edmonton, AB T5W 2A9

phone: (403) 479-4171 Fax: (403) 478-1728

Teachers

WILLOWDALE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

has a definite opening for a

TEACHER

at the Junior/Intermediate level
and possible openings at the Primary level.

Interested persons should send
their c.v. and references to:

Rick Nonnekes, Principal
Willowdale Christian School
60 Hilda Ave.,
North York, ON
M2M 1V5

Help Wanted

NEEDED: A YOUTH PASTOR

First Chr. Ref. Church, Abbotsford, B.C., is looking for a youth pastor (ordained/unordained) to strengthen and coordinate the congregation's ministry to and with youth.

Church profile and job description available.

Please send resumes and inquiries to: Search Committee, Abbotsford 1st CRC, P.O. Box 485, Abbotsford, BC V2S 5Z5 or contact R. Vanderwal at (604) 823-6342.

Help Wanted

ECE GRADUATE NEEDED

An ECE graduate is required for Rehoboth Christian Nursery School that operates three mornings per week. Required to start March 1, 1992 to cover a maternity leave with the possibility of becoming a permanent position.

For further information please phone Edith Van Der Boom at (416) 251-3986 or forward resume to:

Edith Van Der Boom
51 Edgécroft Road
Etobicoke, ON
M8Z 2B9



CALVIN COLLEGE

FACULTY OPENINGS

The college is seeking applications for possible openings beginning September 1992 in the following departments:

Economics and Business
Engineering
English
Geology, Geography, & Environmental Studies
History
Physics
Psychology (quantitative/experimental)
Religion & Theology

Some departments have tenure track positions and some have temporary positions to replace people on leaves.

Inquiries regarding possible future positions in any department are always welcome. Applications from North American minorities in any discipline are strongly encouraged.

Calvin College seeks faculty members who affirm the Christian faith as expressed by the Reformed creeds and have academic and personal qualifications for teaching and scholarship.

Interested persons or persons who wish to make nominations should correspond with the chairperson of the respective department at

Calvin College
3201 Barton St. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546 USA

Calvin College is an equal opportunity employer.

Representative Trainee

in Western Canada (location in B.C. or Alberta).

We invite applications from persons who are interested in a career in labour relations, have the ability to work independently and deal with people, possess good verbal and written communication skills, and have an understanding of how to apply Christian principles to the workplace.

All applications will be held in confidence. CLAC offers a very competitive salary and benefit package. Direct inquiries and applications to:

Ed Grootenboer, Executive Director
5920 Atlantic Drive,
Mississauga, ON L4W 1N6
Tel. (416) 670-7383 Fax: (416) 670-8416

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Experience in a supervisory position in Long Term Care setting is essential.

Understanding and speaking the Dutch language would be a valuable asset.

Submit resume a.s.a.p. to:

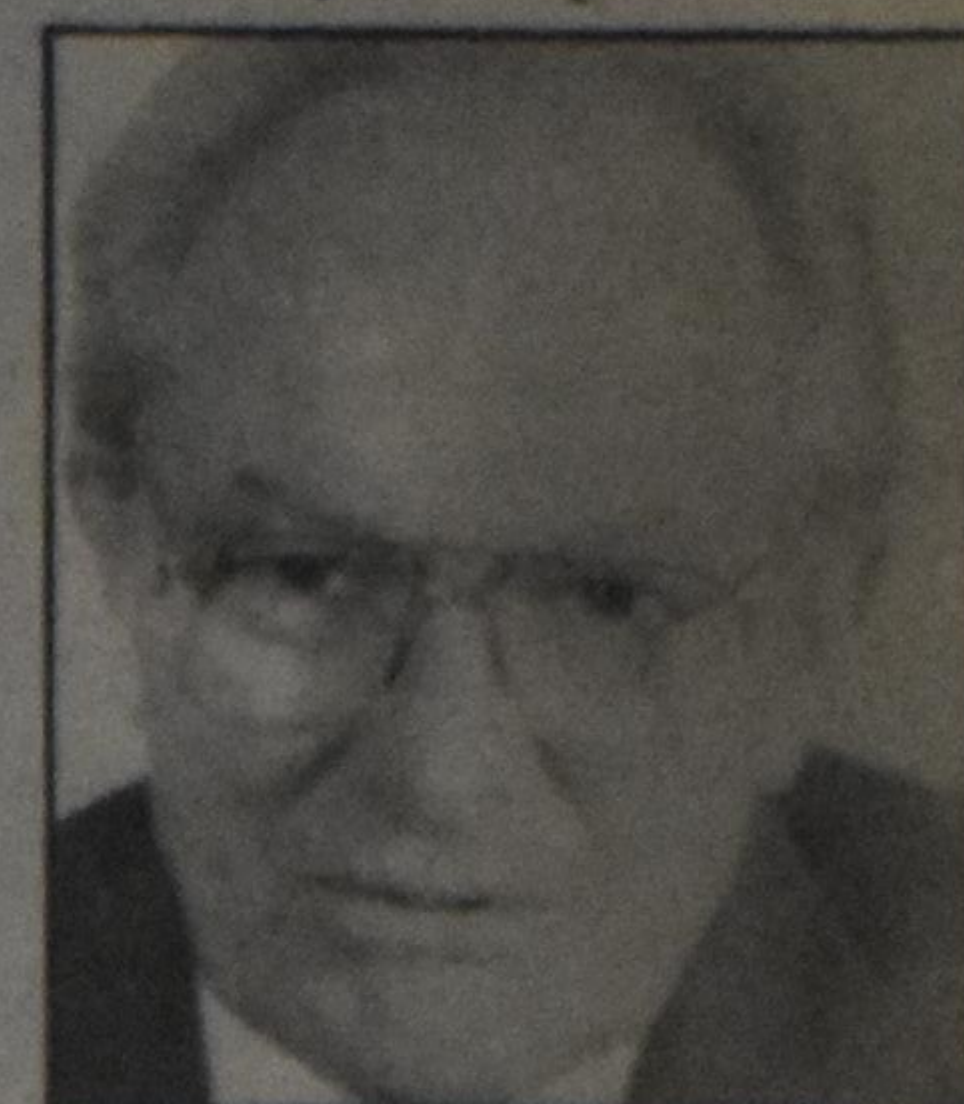
HOLLAND CHRISTIAN HOMES INC.

c/o Director of Care
7900 McLaughlin Road South,
Brampton, ON L6V 3N2
Telephone: (416) 459-3333
or Fax: (416) 459-8667

Miscellaneous

REV. ANDREW KUYVENHOVEN

Keynote Speaker



Partnership in the Gospel VII
"Ambassadors for Christ"

Saturday, March 14, 1992
Calvin Seminary

Registration deadline March 6. Cost is \$15 for entire day, including lunch.

Registration (and coffee) on Sat., March 14, from 8 - 9 a.m.

Keynote speaker: Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven.

Conference from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. at Calvin Seminary, Grand Rapids, Mich.

Sponsored by the following Christian Reformed Churches — Calvin, Church of the Servant, Eastern Ave., First, Grace, Madison Sq., Neland Ave. (Grand Rapids, MI), Third (Kalamazoo, MI), and River Terrace (East Lansing, MI) — and the Committee for Women in the Christian Reformed Church.

For information and registration form write to:

Partnership in the Gospel Conference
506 Eastern Ave. SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
ph. (616) 454-4888

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Classified/Events

McMaster University Chaplaincy

extends an invitation to attend a

PUBLIC FORUM

Theme: **Aboriginal Rights — The Responsibility of Government?**

Thursday, February 20, 1992, 8 p.m.

Ewart Angus Hall 1A1
McMaster University

John Olthuis (native issues lawyer)
and Peter Hamel (Anglican pastor and member Project North)

For more information, feel free to call:

Rev. Aren Geisterfer at
(416) 525-9140, ext. 4123 (work)
(416) 524-0488 (home)
— ADMISSION FREE —



The Woodstock
Dutch
Theatre Group
presents

“Het Eindpunt”

A 3-Act
Tragi-Comedy
in the
Dutch Language
by
J. Hemmink-Kamp

Friday, March 6, 1992

and

Friday, March 13, 1992

at

8:00 p.m.

Woodstock Collegiate Institute Auditorium
35 Riddell Street, Woodstock

Admission: \$6.00 in Advance (up to February 25)
\$8.00 at the Door

Net proceeds to
Canadian Diabetes Association
Coffee & Door Prizes in Intermission

For tickets, send your cheque and a stamped self-addressed envelope to:

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R.R. #3
Woodstock, ON N4S 7V7
(519) 462-2866

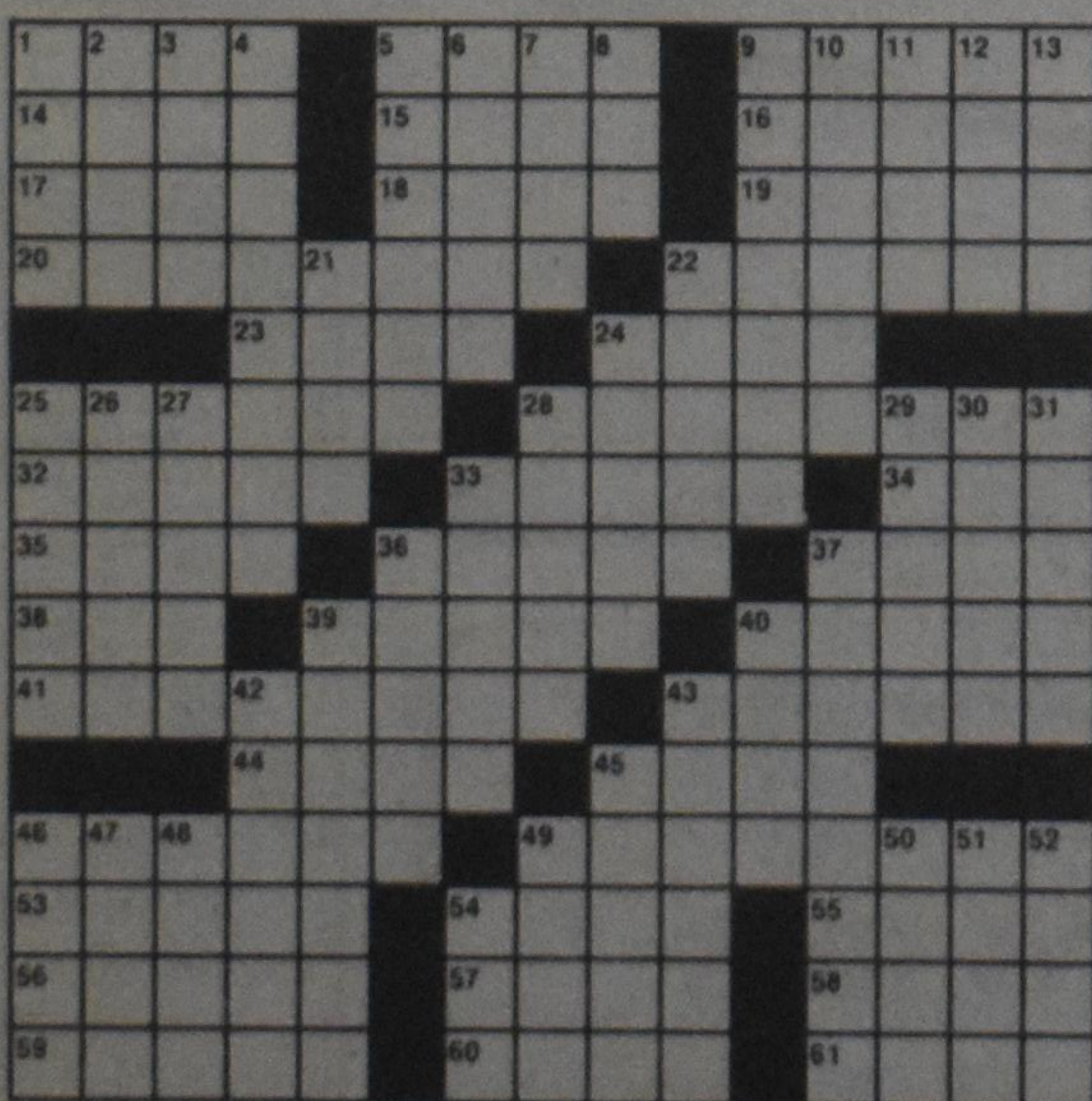
Bill Hesselink
R.R. #3
Woodstock, ON N4S 7V7
(519) 539-2134

Also playing at Clinton Klompenfeest, May 16, 1992.

Weekly puzzle

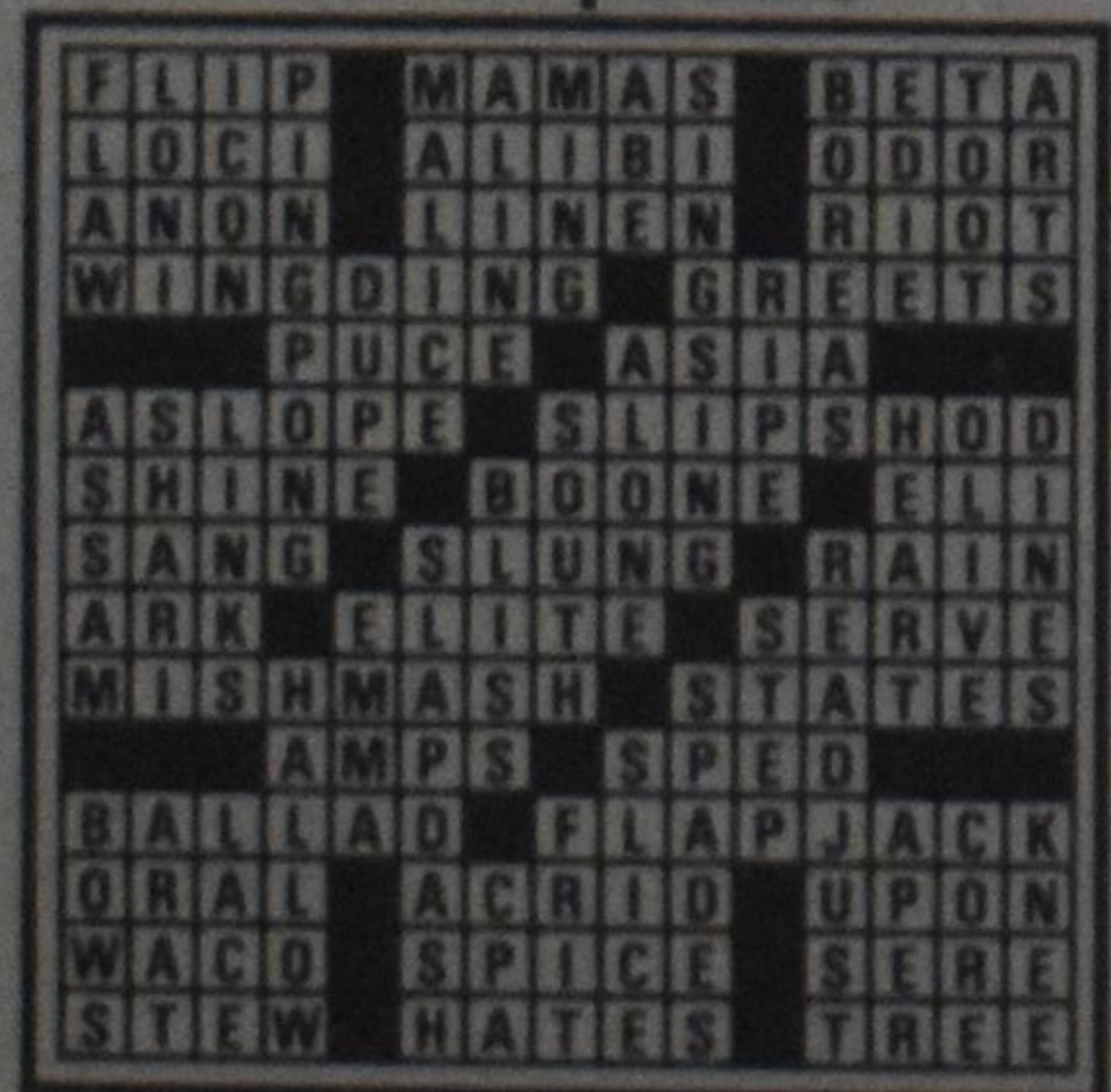
by Virginia Hopewell

ACROSS
1 Assay
5 Chef
9 Apple juice
14 Eros
15 Apogee
16 Plant disease
17 Antitoxins
18 Ridge of rocks
19 Equip again
20 Of a certain area
22 Lennon e.g.
23 Satellite
24 Preliminary contest
25 Religious jurisdiction
28 Blend
32 Deserts one's party
33 Framework
34 Depressed
35 Sailing
36 Corrupt
37 Valley
38 Large cask
39 Walked back and forth
40 Ulan —
41 Approved
43 Toolbox item
44 After: pref.
45 Long time
46 Slum
49 Pick
53 Relative value
54 Gag
55 Hercules' captive
56 IL city
57 Actress
58 Lab burner
59 Sounds of distress
60 Doe
61 Peruse



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Last week's puzzle



DOWN
1 Soviet news org.
2 Big bird: var.
3 Old world tree
4 Emotional shocks
5 Lab bottle
6 Indian e.g.
7 Foretold

8 Indian hemp
9 Bran and oats
10 Conceive
11 Skillful
12 Author Ludwig
13 Have status
21 Birds of legend
22 Brute
24 Pursue
25 Moderate
26 Patty officer
27 Mixture
28 Shed tears
29 List of candidates
30 Picturesque detail
31 Spouted
33 Musical direction
36 It: poet
37 More fastidious
39 Subatomic particles
40 Faction

42 Choice
43 Eye
45 Similar
46 Chickpea
47 Nimbus
48 Ms Kett
49 Whimper
50 Memory
51 Arm bone
52 Honey beverage
54 Proof letters

Calendar of Events

Feb. 8	Pioneer Clubs Leadership Conference, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., Parkview Fellowship Baptist Church, Halifax, N.S. Call (416) 681-2883.	Feb. 20-29	Students of LDCH, London, Ont. , present an adaption of "Anne of Green Gables." At 8 p.m., on Feb. 20, 21, 27, 28 and 29.
Feb. 8	Concert by the Hamilton Worship Band, 8 p.m., Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.	Feb. 22	Annual Telecare Brampton benefit concert by "The Canadian Orpheus Male Choir," at 8 p.m., St. Paul's United Church, Brampton, Ont.
Feb. 14-16	"Serving Christ in the Nineties III" conference at Bolton Conference Centre, Bolton, Ont. Keynote speaker: Dr. N. Wolterstorff on "Flourishing in Community." For info. call (416) 825-3578.	Feb. 22	Pioneer Clubs Leadership Conference, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., Calvary Church, St. Catharines, Ont. Call (416) 681-2883.
Feb. 18-19	Public lectures by Dr. Heiko Oberman at the ICS, Toronto, Ont. Feb. 18: 3:30 p.m. and 8 p.m.; Feb. 19: 4 p.m. Call (416) 979-2331.	Feb. 23	City-wide hymn-sing, 8 p.m., First CRC, Sarnia, Ont.
Feb. 20	Public forum on "Aboriginal rights, the responsibility of government?" Speakers: John Olthuis and Peter Hamel. At 8 p.m., Ewart Angus Hall 1A1, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ont. Admission free.	Feb. 28-March 1	Salem Marriage Enrichment Weekend, with leaders Herman & Betty Vanderburg. At Mount Carmel Spiritual Centre, Niagara Falls, Ont. For info. call Salem at (416) 528-0353.

Real Estate

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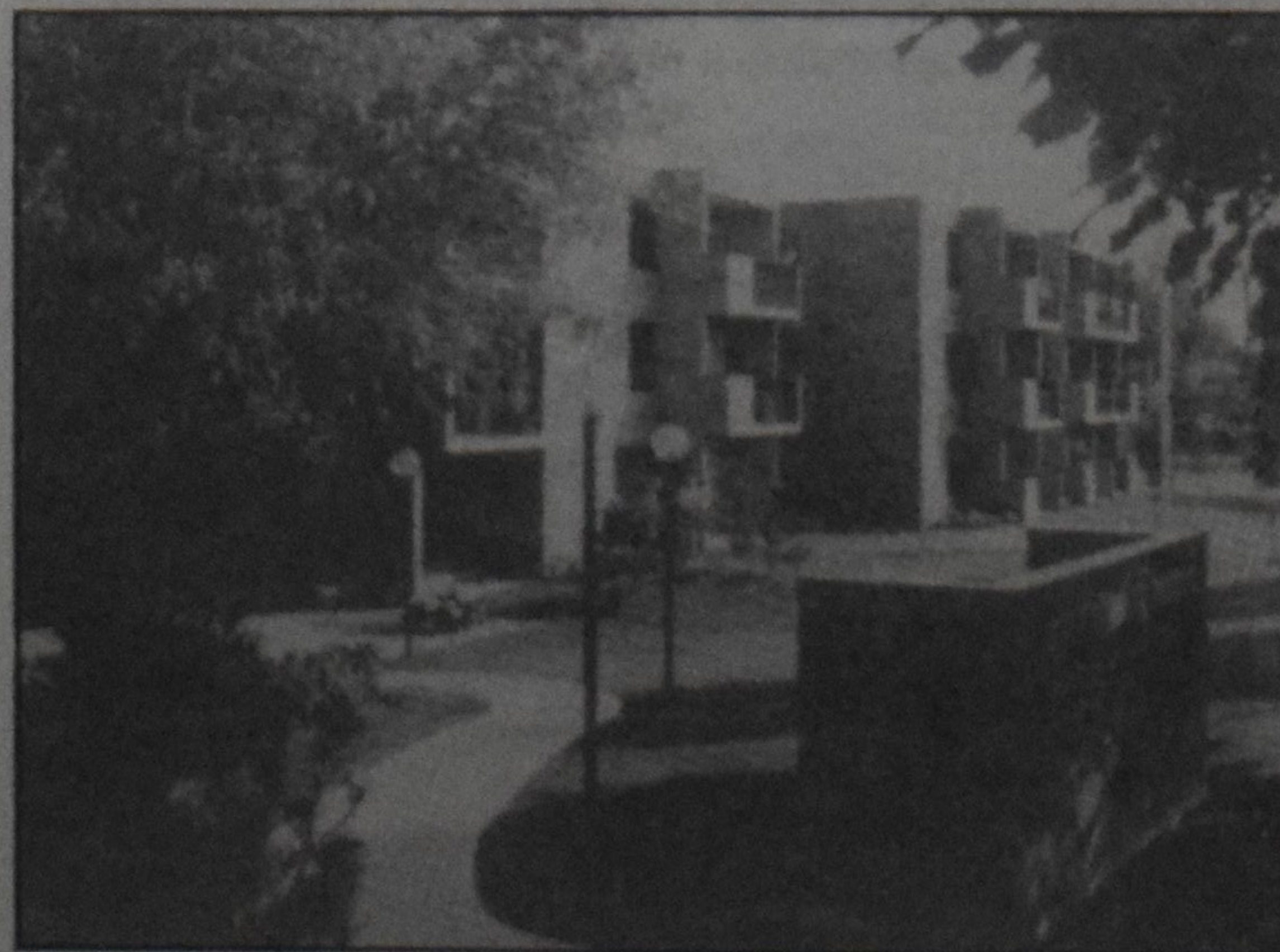
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Canadian Reformed Churches

Calls received

— to Grand Rapids, **Mich.**,
Rev. D.G.J. Agema of
Attercliffe, Ont.

— to Port Kells, **B.C.**, Rev.
E. Kampen of Immanuel,
Edmonton.

— to **London, Ont.**, Rev. R.
van Wijnen of Zuidwolde,
Drenthe, the Netherlands.

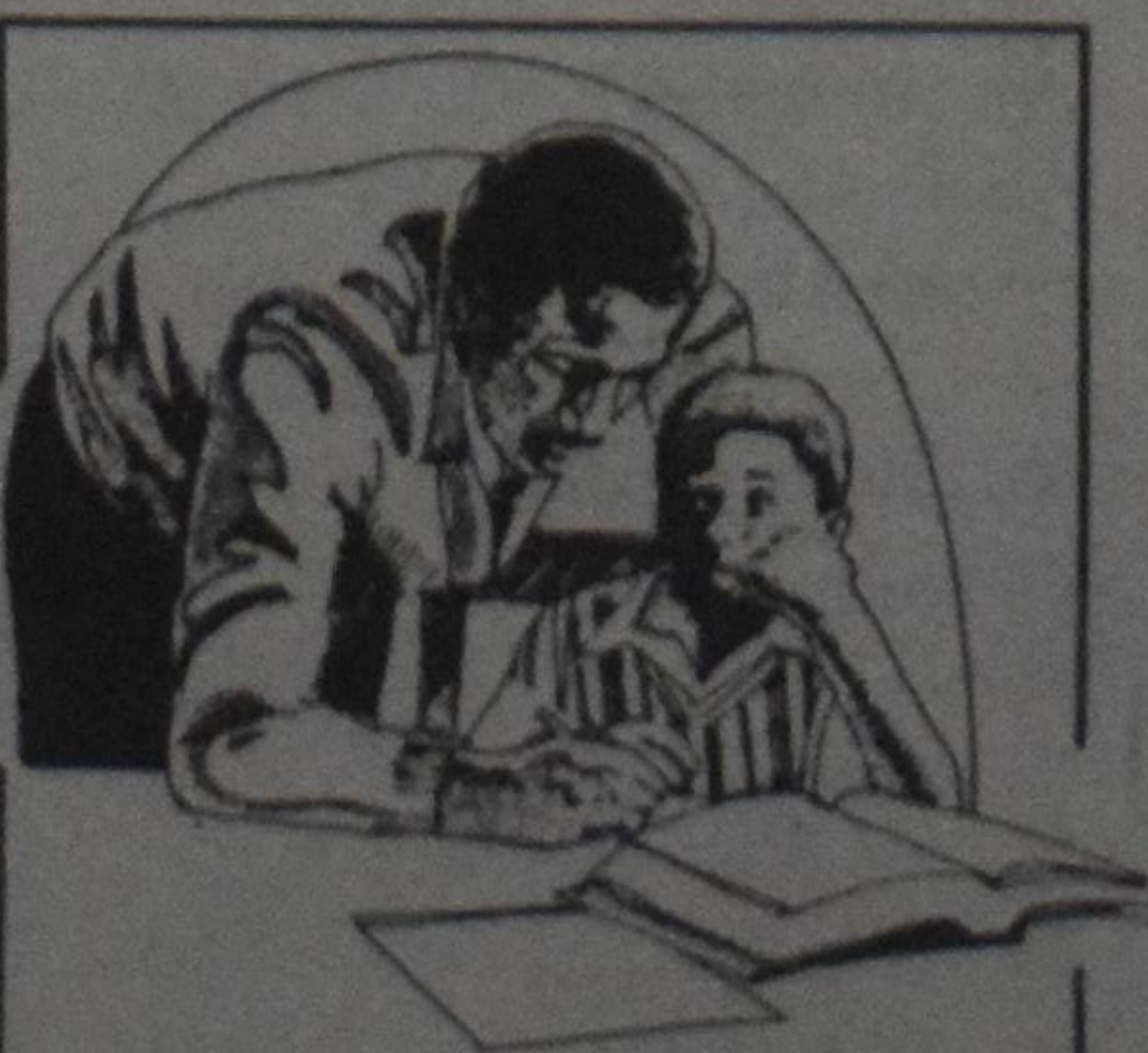
Calls declined

— to **Brampton, Ont.**, Rev.
P.K.A. de Boer of Caman,
Man.

— to **Ancaster, Ont.**, Rev.
R.A. Schouten of **Calgary.**

— to mission work in **Brazil**,
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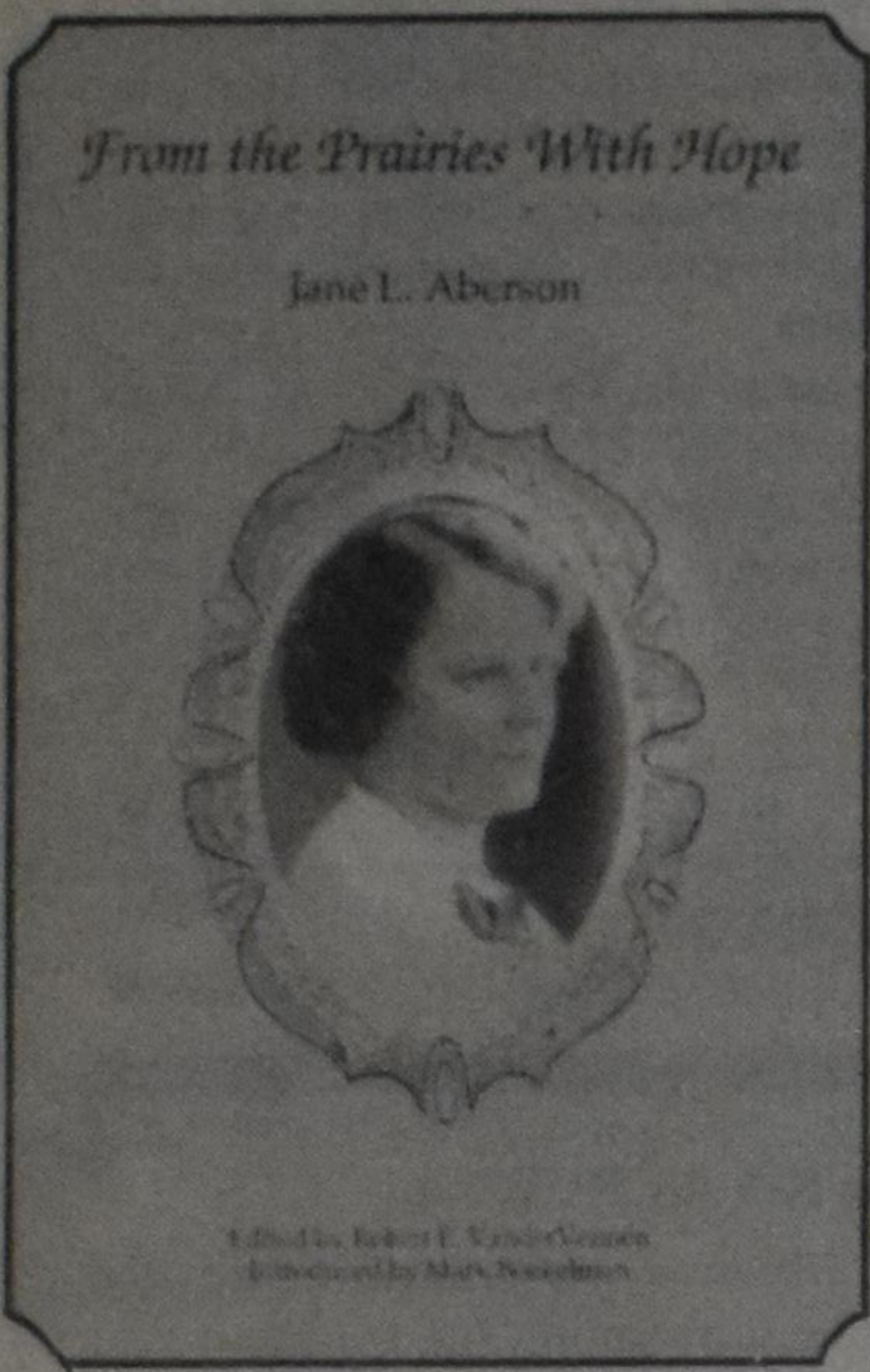


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Books

Robert VanderVennen, page editor

Dutch immigrant pioneering on the prairies



From the Prairies With Hope, by Jane L. Aberson. Edited by Robert E. Vandervennen; introduced by Mark Boekelman. Regina, Sask.: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1991. ISBN 0-88977-064-6. Softcover, 177 pp., \$18.00. Reviewed by Jacoba Bos, Strathroy, Ont.

Jane L. Aberson, who is now 91 years old, is one of those indomitable women who has made a lasting contribution to Canada.

She was born in the Netherlands and raised in an upper-class family where servants did the work and her mother played tennis for entertainment.

Jane married her high school sweetheart, Bob Aberson, an accountant, in a ceremony in Calcutta, (British) India, where Bob had been transferred. Since there were no friends or relatives present, the native servants wore Dutch flags in their turbans in honour of this festive occasion. During a one-year stay in this far away country, the Dutch couple discovered that Bob was not the kind of person to do office work for the rest of his life. Realizing that Bob had chosen the wrong profession, the couple decided to return to the Netherlands to inquire about farming opportunities.

In spite of the opposing views of their relatives, Bob and Jane pursued their dream to become farmers. They travelled to the Hague to ask immigration officials about farming in other countries. While there, they saw a large billboard depicting a young farmer and his wife with a baby

in their arms in the midst of a golden grain field beside a pair of beautiful horses. "Canada my Country" was the bold slogan on this idyllic and unrealistic picture. The adventurous couple decided then and there that Canada was also going to be *their* country, no matter how much family and immigration officials advised against such a move.

'Forget those plans'

"We advise you strongly to forget those plans and go back to the work to which you were trained," they wrote to Bob who, after a few unsuccessful attempts at an office job, decided to venture out alone to the land of the golden wheatfields. In 1923 he left his wife and young son and travelled to Canada where he found work on a farm near Dauphin, Manitoba, as a hired man. He earned a dollar per day and gained much needed experience in farming. Bob also attended an agriculture college in Winnipeg where he learned more about the Canadian way of farming. The many letters he wrote to his wife were a mixture of sentiment about the beauty of the Canadian landscape and a nagging doubt whether Jane would be able to live without the conveniences of electricity and running water.

When Bob found a small place for rent, Jane decided to join him. Bob was then working for a farmer and the farmer's wife was willing to "break in Jane."

After two months of learning about cooking, baking, gardening and preserving Jane felt confident enough to keep house, so the couple with their two-year-old son moved into a log cabin. When their second son, Wim, was born there, Jane wished she could show her family her fair and beautiful baby who slept comfortably in a silk-lined laundry basket. Because their relatives were oceans away and the nearest neighbour lived miles away, the young family depended on their own resources to make a happy home.

Versatile woman

Jane Aberson describes farm life in Western Canada during the early '30s with clarity and a touch of humour. She learned to love her adopted country, accepting its customs and lifestyle, yet cherishing many Dutch traditions. This is evident in the naming of her and Bob's son, Wim, and also in the Dutch custom of celebrating *Sinterklaasfeest* on Dec. 5.

Throughout the book the reader gets the picture of a woman who spends the day polishing the silver for the upcoming Christmas dinner

with her Dutch friends, and then goes out after dark to shoot a rabbit for the same festive occasion.

The reader also gets a view of what farming was like in the "dirty '30s" when farm fields turned into dust bowls and grain prices were at an all time low. The writer describes these events very matter-of-factly, always with a note of optimism.

From the Prairies With Hope is a testimony of the tremendous importance of the strong immigrant woman who stood by her husband through droughts and falling prices, through sickness and health, through disasters and good times. The book also makes the reader aware of the great influence a farm woman has in her family, in the community where she lives and even on the economy.

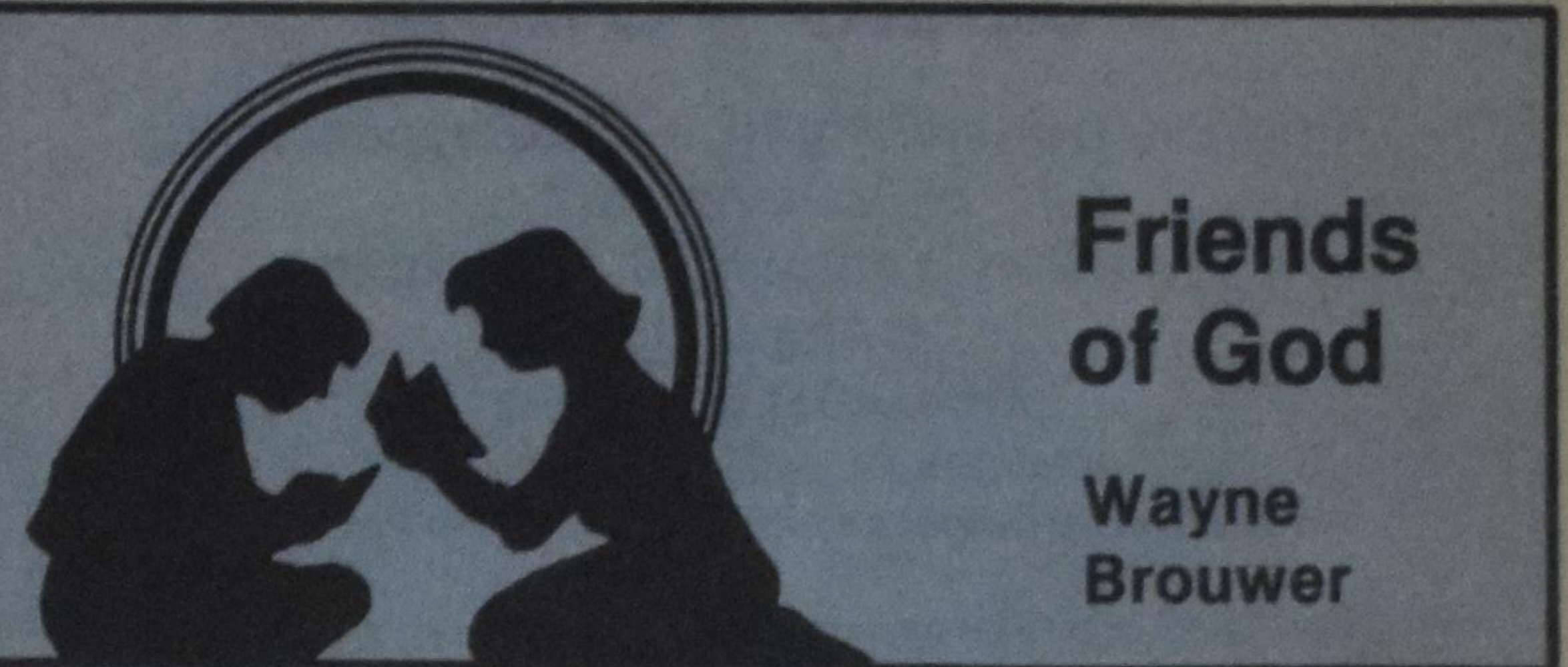
In some respects there are many similarities between farm women of today and those of Jane Aberson's time. Jane took to writing to make some extra money for her family; today's farm women also work to pay living expenses. Produce and grain prices were very low in the '30s. Today's farmers are facing the same dilemma, with the cost of producing crops sometimes outweighing the return price.

As in the case of many of today's farm families, the Abersons' three sons did not stay on the farm. The three brothers pursued professional careers while their parents lived on the home farm till both were in their 80s.

The Abersons' success as farmers on the prairies owed much to their ability to use their professional skills to supplement their farm income. They founded a credit union which they operated for many years from their home. And Jane's income from journalism and lecturing (she spoke for groups in Canada and Holland, drawing large audiences) kept them on the farm. As Jane puts it, "We had a wonderful life on the farm, but we made our money with writing and with running a credit union."

This book is a story of courage, determination and hope for better things to come.

Jane Aberson's story first appeared in *Het Nieuwsblad van het Noorden*, a newspaper in the Dutch province of Groningen. The writer was a special correspondent for that newspaper. She kept up her reports about farm life on the Canadian prairies for 37 years. The book is a translation of her articles dating from 1929 to 1936. The editing skills of Robert VanderVennen have made this valuable book into very interesting reading.



Postcards from the edge (III)

"Some wandered in desert wastelands...; some sat in darkness...; some became fools through their rebellious ways...; others went out on the sea in ships..." (Ps. 107: 4, 10, 17, 23).

Psalm 107 begins, as we've seen in the past two weeks, with four "Postcards from the Edge," four pictures from crisis moments in the lives of people we know. Four times the psalmist tells us the same story of catastrophe: a family is lost in the wilderness; a people loses hope in a prison camp; men and women die on sickbeds; sailors are tossed at sea.

In the middle of each disaster, a cry goes up to heaven: "Save us, Lord!" And then the hand of God reaches into the picture and brings help, hope, healing and harbour. And the frame surrounding each portrait lights up with the joy of thanksgiving music.

Morality plays?

At first it seems a bit like the morality plays of the Middle Ages. Actors on stage portray what happens when you forget God: difficulties plague your walk through the wilderness; death locks you in its prison camp; disease stalks the hospital corridors; disaster hunts you on the high seas.

On the other hand, of course, are the scenes that show what happens to you when you remember God and ask him to help you, and live according to his laws: the hand of God reaches into your life and provides refuge in the wilderness, release from prison, restoration from disease and rescue from storms at sea.

But you know life's not like that! That can't be the whole message of Psalm 107! That even contradicts the message of some of the other psalms! Remember Psalm 73? It was written by Asaph, chief of the musicians in the temple courts. He wrote songs for worship at the morning and evening sacrifices. He was devout and godly. Yet in Psalm 73 he shouts to God:

Why do the wicked prosper while the righteous are forgotten by you?

Why do those who curse you get ahead in life, while those of us who bless you are left in poverty?

And you know it even from your own lives that this can't be a true morality play. Are the ill in the hospitals more godless than the healthy? On mornings when you have family or personal devotions, do you always have a perfect day? Are those who go to church twice on Sunday less likely to be in an accident on Monday?

Let's get real!

Perspective

So there's got to be more to this psalm than just cause and effect. And in the last two verses it all pops into place: "The upright see and rejoice..." (vs. 42). What do they see? That the good guys always win? That the bad guys always lose?

No. It's more than that. They see the hand of God in the picture of life. They don't always know what he's doing in each situation or experience, but they're positive about which direction he's leading. They aren't always sure of *how* he will act, but they're confident of his caring presence. They have *perspective*. They have *insight*. They are able to step back from the scenes of life and know God's promises: "I will never leave you! I will never forsake you! Your times are in my hand!"

Psalm 107 reminds us that there are rights and wrongs in life. But it also tells us that right and wrong only begin to matter when we see that God is involved in the day to day affairs of his world.

As the saying goes: "Hindsight is better than foresight, but never as good as insight!"

Can you read that in the "Postcards from the Edge" in your own life?

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor at First Christian Reformed Church in London, Ont.

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